NETAJI
His Life and Work

Edited by

SHRI RAM SHARMA

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PREFACE

The idea for bringing out a volume on Netaji was the result of the heart-rending news of his death in an air-crash in Formosa, received in the Central Prison, Fatehgarh (U.P.) in the summer of 1945. My friend and assistant Shri Somendra Mohan Mookerjee and myself were in the same barrack and on the same berth. We talked off and on, on the subject. Thus the seed of this volume was sown behind the prison bars. It germinated in 1946 after our release and now it has culminated in the full blossom in the shape of the present volume.

But the completion of this volume had to face enormous difficulties like the vicissitudes Netaji had to suffer in his life. The Calcutta carnage with its concommitant variations in the form of panic, uncertainty of life, labour shortage and the scarcity of paper scared us at every step. Sometimes the difficulties appeared to be unsurmountable. The gloomy political atmosphere coupled with post-war conditions was more than one could bear. But Shrijut Kedar Nath Chatterji, Editor of the *Modern Review* and *Prabasi* came to my rescue. Language is too poor a vehicle to convey the feelings of heart. Suffice it to say that without his co-operation and help in this venture the book would not have seen the light of the day. From editing down to procurement of paper he gave his heartiest co-operation and help.

My friend Shri Somendra Mohan Mookerjee not only rendered valuable service in the preparation of this volume but he was the very emblem of enthusiasm.

He was always at beck and call and he rightly believes that there is perennial nobleness in every action. His unflinching devotion to duty and his readiness to work against heavy odds for this volume are more than I can express. He took every risk during the riots of Calcutta in the fulfilment of the task assigned to him. To be grateful to him in a common cause will, I suppose, be against Indian Culture.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee for his help in rendering Indian National Anthem, Flag Song and the Marching Song of the I.N.A. into English.

The artistic side of the book has been embellished by beautiful photo prints preserved by the I.N.A. Central Head Quarters, Delhi. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Shrimati Lakshmi Swaminathan (now Mrs.

Lakshmi Sehgal) for her very valuable information and recommendation for procuring these photographs hitherto unpublished.

My thanks are also due to Shri Suresh Chandra Deb for his valuable help and Shri Bibhuti Bhusan Das Gupta for the correction of proofs.

All the contributors of this volume who took pains in writing out the articles incorporated in it have put me under their obligations.

I thank the Prabasi Press for the excellent printing and get-up of the volume.

The welcome address 'Desh-Nayak' was obtained by the courtesy of the *Viswa Bharati.* It will not be out of place to mention that this is a translation from the original Bengali under the direction of late Gurudev who wrote it in May, 1939, with the idea of presenting this address in person to Shri Subhas Chandra Bose in a special function at Santiniketan. The proposed function could not be materialized and the address remained unprinted. It was first released for publication by *Viswa Bharati* on the birth-anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath on the 8th May, 1946.

I am indebted to 'Bapuji' for his personal kindness to me and therefore I thought it proper to incorporate in this volume the best tribute he paid to Netaji at Noakhali on the 23rd January, 1947.

My thanks are also due to Messrs. Rajkamal Publications, Delhi for the permission to reproduce the article NETAJI of General Shah Nawaz Khan.

I trust readers outside India in general and in India in particular will read the volume with profit and get a complete picture of one of the greatest Sons of India, whose life is a Bible of sturdy patriotism.

SHRI RAM SHARMA,
Editor.

56B, Neogi Pukur Lane,
Calcutta, 14.
Krishna Janmashthmi,
Vikram Samvat. 2004.
7-9-47.

NETAJI'S UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT

MAHATMA GANDHI

The greatest lesson that we can draw from Netaji's life is the way in which he infused the spirit of unity amongst his men so that they could rise above all religious and provincial barriers and shed together their blood for the common cause. His unique achievement would surely immortalise him in the pages of history. Every one of Netaji's followers who saw me on their return to India had said to me without exception that Netaji's influence acted like a charm on them and they had acted under him with the single aim of achieving Indian Freedom. The question of religious and provincial or any such difference had never cropped in their minds at all.

Netaji was a man of great parts and abilities. Vastly erudite and intelligent he passed the I. C. S. examination, but he did not join that service. On his return to India he came under the influence of Deshabandhu Das and became the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation. Later he became President of the Congress for two terms but most notable of his achievements were his activities outside India when he escaped from the country and wandering through Kabul, Italy, Germany and other countries, ultimately reached Japan. Whatever outsiders might think I would vouch that there was no one in India today who would think that his escape was an act of crime. As Tulsidas has said that no wrong attaches to the really mighty, so no blame could be ascribed to Netaji's name for his escape. When he first raised his army, he did not think of its insignificant number. He thought that whatever might be the number they must endure their best to free India.

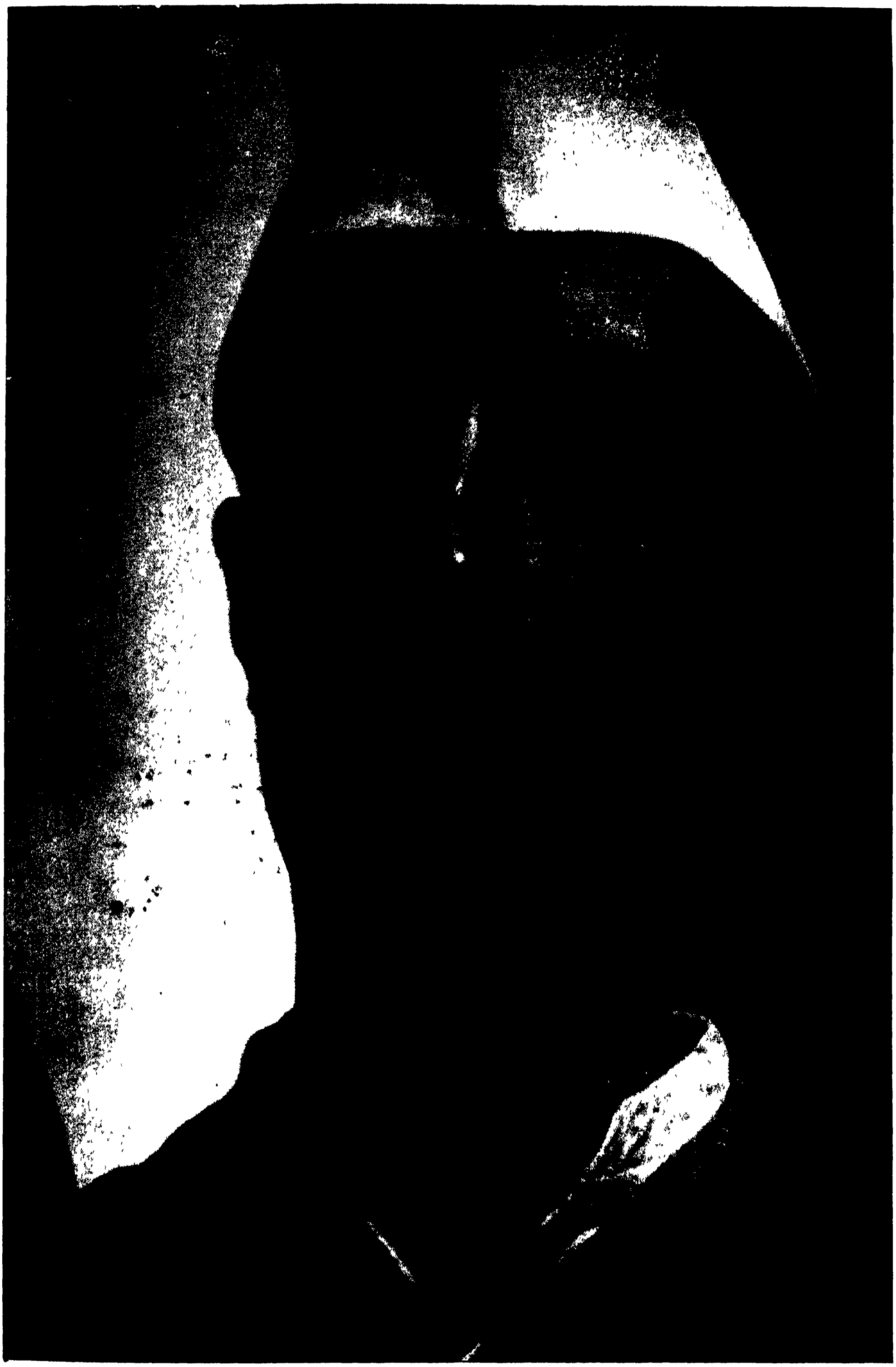
The greatest and the lasting act of Netaji was that he abolished all distinctions of caste and class. He was not a mere Bengali. He never thought himself to be a Caste Hindu. He was Indian first and last. What more, he fired all under him with the same zeal so that they forgot in his presence all distinctions and acted as one man.

NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had been an ardent patriot and spent his whole life down to the last day in the service of his country. His fearless courage, his reckless abandon, his suffering and sacrifice have become a part of the legendary story of India's struggle for freedom. Future generations will read the amazing story of his life with pride and reverence, and salute him as one of the great heroes who heralded India's dawn.

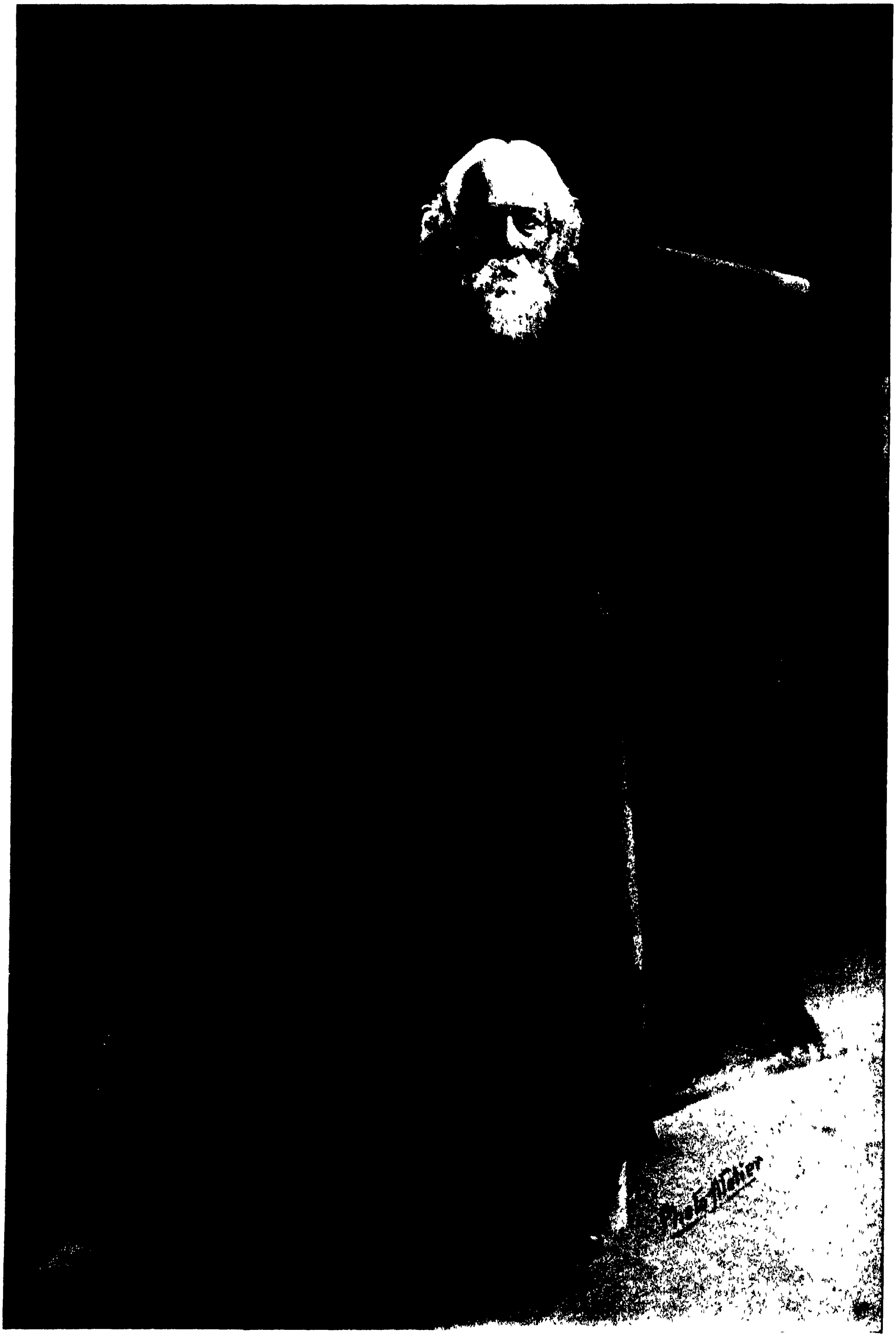
S. RADHAKRISHNAN

April 4, 1947.



Our beloved Prime Minister, Hon. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

By courtesy : *The Modern Revie*



Rabindranath Tagore

This is probably the last standing pose, given by the poet in March, 1941.

By courtesy : *The Modern Review*

DESH-NAYAK

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Poets in the East have ever voiced their peoples' tribute to the national heroes, and as Bengal's poet, I today acknowledge you as the honoured leader of the people of Bengal. It has been assured in our scripture that from time to time the eternal principle of the good arises to challenge the reign of the evil. When misfortunes from all directions swarm to attack the living spirit of the nation, its anguished cry calls forth from its own being the liberator to its rescue. Suffering from the deadening effect of the prolonged punishment inflicted upon her young generation and disintegrated by internal faction, Bengal is passing through a period of dark despair. Everyday, at every effort of ours to move, we are thwarted by vicious rents in the social, economic and moral structure of our life. In all our political adventures we are dismayed to find the helm of our ship disabled and the oars pulled in a discordant lack of rhythm. A suicidal mania seems to be prevalent in our society that takes a peculiar pleasure in sapping the strength of the country by insidious dealings and all this at a time when it should be our duty to justify our existence before the doubting gaze of the world. Wearied by the concerted conspiracy of sinister forces both outside and within, we are increasingly losing the vital power to resist them and recover from their attack.

At such a juncture of nation-wide crisis, we require the service of a forceful personality, the invincible faith of a natural-born leader, who can defy the adverse fate that threatens our progress.

Subhas Chandra, I have watched the dawn that witnessed the beginning of your political *sadhana*. In that uncertain twilight there had been misgivings in my heart and I had hesitated to accept you for what you are now. Now and again I have felt hurt by stray signs of your weakness and irresolute hesitancy. Today you are revealed in the pure light of mid-day sun which does not admit of apprehensions. You have come to absorb varied experience during these years. Today you bring your matured mind and irrepressible vitality to bear upon the work at hand. Your strength has sorely been taxed by imprisonment, banishment and disease, but rather than impairing these have helped to broaden your sympathies—enlarging your vision so as to embrace the vast perspective of history beyond any narrow

limits of territory. You did not regard apparent defeat as final: therefore, you have turned your trials into your allies. More than anything else, Bengal need today to emulate the powerful force of your determination and your self-reliant courage.

With patience we are sure to reach our great end, if only we can all work together. But why should there be a big if ? Why should we be faint on faith? We must unite, if we want to live. Let it be your untiring mission to claim of your countrymen the resoluteness, the unyielding will to live and to conquer, strengthened by the inspiration of your own life. Let Bengal affirm in one united voice that her deliverer's seat is readyspread for you. Let her natural recriminations and self-insults vanish for ever in your person. Let everything mean and cowardly be put to shame by the magnitude of the task awaiting us. May she offer you honour worthy of a leader by retaining her self-respect in trials as well as triumphs.

The Bengali mind, proud of its logic, is caught in the meshes of its own genius. It takes enormous pleasure in spinning our subtleties of argument for their own futile sake and proudy asserts the independence of its intellect by contradicting all schemes of enterprise from their inception. No practical proposal, no organisation, is safe from its destructive casuistry. But this is not the time for idly indulging in the sterile game of polemics, splitting things to pieces. We need the creative inspiration that would rouse the nation into a unity of will. Let this united will of Bengal ask you to take your place as our guide and also seek to create you by the force of its claims. Through that creation will be revealed the spirit of the people in this individual personality of yours.

The vision of this will I did once realise during the Bengal Partition Movement. The sword that was raised to divide her living body into two parts was baffled by its resistance. On that day Bengal did not sit down vainly to argue like a wiseacre, weighing her *pros* and *cons* against the decree of a mighty imperial power. She willed and the obstruction vanished.

In the following generation we have witnessed the manifestations of this will in the heart of the Bengali youth. They were born with the fiery spirit that could light up the torch of freedom; but they burnt themselves, they missed their path. Despite the fatal futility of their tragic mistake, this fact will ever remain luminous in our history, that these young souls personated in their lives the irresistible will of their country and suffered.

The negative testimony of the weakness of our country must not be allowed to breed pessimism in our minds. Wherever the signs of her strength have ever made themselves evident we must know that there lies

her truth. They are like living seeds that keep the promise of her future in their core. It should be your life's work to make fruitful in the soil of Bengal all nascent hopes that are waiting in obscurity.

You may say that work of such stupendous responsibility is impossible for one single individual to achieve. But you must know that it is still more impossible for a crowd to do this in the chaos of its scattered multiplicity. It must find its soul in one who has the spiritual power to assimilate all into a comprehensive unity. The born-leaders of men are never alone and they never belong to the fugitive moment. The eternal message of the sunrise of the future they carry in their own lives.

As I feel that you have come with an errand to usher a new light of hope in your motherland, I ask you to take up the task of the leader of Bengal and ask my countrymen to make it true.

Let nobody make such a grievious mistake as to think that in a foolish pride of narrow provincialism, I desire to see Bengal as an entity separate from the rest of India, or dream of setting in my own province a rival throne to the one on which is seated a majestic figure representing a new age in the political history of the world. What I have tried to express is my wish that Bengal should in every way be worthy related to the vaster body, so that she will not be relegated to back seat, that her membership in the body politic may be complete, and fruitful. I have no doubt that the blessings of Mahatmaji will always be with you and the comradeship of the other valiant sons of India, in that larger struggle in which, I pray, that your *Sadhana* may help Bengal to come out with her self-dedication that will represent her true gift to Indian Nationalism.

Long ago at a meeting I addressed my message to the leader of Bengal who was yet to seek. After a lapse of many years I am addressing at this meeting one who has come into the full light of recognition. My days have come to their end. I may not join him in the fight that is to come. I can only bless him and take my leave, knowing that he has made his country's burden of sorrow his own, that his final reward is fast coming as his country's freedom.

A GREAT PATRIOT

SAROJINI NAIDU

The name of Subhas Chandra Bose is an integral part of the history of India's fight for freedom.

The last years of his life—if indeed they are the last years of his life—are charged with vivid drama and present to us a stirring and moving stage of a great patriot. With an implacable passion for liberty whose intrepid courage and remarkable gift of initiative imagination, organisation and leadership found their fullest expression in a foreign land which he had made the scene of his memorable campaign for the independence of India.

His finest achievement to my mind was the deep sense of national unity he was able to kindle in his army and the profound and almost fanatical love and loyalty he was able to inspire.

A GREAT LEADER

GOVINDBALLABH PANT

Subhas Babu was one of the greatest patriots and revolutionary leaders ever born. He had a supreme and central objective throughout his life and every fibre of his being was devoted to it. He had only one dominating passion and while yet a child it had taken a deep root. He had dedicated himself to the liberation of his motherland from alien stranglehold. He was even prepared to pay any price and cared not for the means so long as the end was served and secured. Thereby he was never deterred by any personal or other considerations in the active pursuit of his sole aim and ambition in life. He displayed remarkable qualities of leadership and organisation and for these he has been appropriately given by the entire nation, the distinguished title of Netaji. His memory will never fade and his name will ever remain enshrined in letters of gold in the history of Indian Freedom.



N taji with C. Hen la of the Japanese and Naval officers and A. M. Sahay in a Submarine

"NETAJI"

BY MAJ.-GENERAL SHAH NAWAZ KHAN

It is indeed a very difficult task, nay almost an impossible one for a humble person like myself to attempt to depict a true picture of Netaji who would certainly go down in history as one of the greatest men India has ever produced.

I have been asked by several friends to give a true picture of Netaji as I saw him. The attempt I am making would probably be unworthy of the glory of my great leader. Nevertheless, I would request my readers to forgive me for this failing, for Netaji was such a great man and I a humble soldier. How then can I describe him adequately ?

I must frankly confess that from the moment I came into personal contact with him he exercised a strange influence over me. Even now, I do not know in what proportion the man, the soldier and the statesman in him were blended. At home the man in him seemed to dominate, at the front and in the midst of his troops, the soldier in him shone in splendid glory, and in the councils and conferences and at his desk, as Head of the State of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, his brilliant statesmanship made a profound impression on one and all of us.

As I have described elsewhere I was one of those officers who were brought up in military atmosphere and of loyalty to the British Crown. Ever since the start of the first I.N.A., I had been fighting against it, as I felt all along that the Japanese were exploiting us and at heart I was an admirer of the British people. Therefore, when Netaji arrived I watched him very keenly. What impressed me most about him was his absolute devotion to his country and to secure the independence of India, he was prepared to make any sacrifice. He held the independence of his mother country above everything else in the world.

It is essential to know a man in order to understand his work and I have known Netaji for the entire period he was in East Asia. I was with him in Singapore; then I moved with him to Burma, where we stayed together for nearly a year and a half. It is beyond my power and ability to describe one who was so unique in his qualities. All his qualities are abundantly clear from the respect he received from Indians in East Asia. His was a personality which captivated every one who met him, even

foreigners. It was he and he alone who welded all Indians in East Asia into one unit, and it was he who created a feeling of friendship and harmony among the nations of the East and his people. He was greatly loved and esteemed not as a sacred deity but as a man, as a hero, as a friend, and as a comrade. What was the secret of this abounding love and profound respect which the masses had for him ? Why was he acclaimed as the undisputed leader of Indians in East Asia ? It was because he was a man of courage, character and generous impulses.

As a man he was a good friend and kind companion. He was the leader of Indians in East Asia and yet he was unassuming. He lived a very austere life; he worked very hard, and shared with his comrades their sufferings. He took great care that every one of his comrades were cared for. He went into the details of every matter big or small, and took pleasure in helping the needy. He despised pomp and grandeur.

At first we were sceptical about Netaji's relations with the Japanese. We had seen how they had behaved with the people of Malaya and Burma and quite frankly we did not trust them. They also behaved in an unbecoming and rather a treacherous manner with Gen. Mohan Singh. We were anxious to see how they would behave towards Netaji and how he would react to their behaviour. Very soon we found out that Netaji was not the person who would ever bow down before any one or sell the honour of his country for any price.

His frankness was another quality which won the hearts of his officers and men alike. One day, some officers asked Netaji to explain to us exactly where we stood with the Japanese. He told us that as far as the Japanese were concerned, they realised that as long as the British held India and could use it as a base of supply and operation against the Japanese, the Japanese Empire could never be safe; and that, in their own interests the Japanese must drive the British out of India, otherwise they themselves would be driven out of East Asia. He said that the Japanese, by assisting us were doing no favour to Indians. We were helping them as much as they were helping us. We had a common aim inasmuch as we both were interested in driving the British out of India, the Japanese for their own safety and we for the independence of our motherland. He said that quite frankly he did not trust the British nor did he trust the Japanese. He went on to say that where it was the question of the independence of ones' country one could trust no one and, as long as we were weak we would always be exploited. Netaji said that the surest guarantee against being betrayed by the Japanese was to build up our own strength. He said that

we should ask for no safeguards from the Japanese, our surest safeguard must be our own strength, and if on going into India, we found that the Japanese wished to replace the British, we should turn round and fight them too. At several lectures at mass meetings Netaji repeated this. He warned his soldiers that any one who joined the I.N.A. should come prepared, first to fight the British, and then, if necessary to fight the Japanese too. Although we had a common strategy with the Japanese Army, we had our own independent sectors of the front, where the I.N.A. sectors units operated entirely by themselves. There was no Japanese central direction within the I.N.A. Some critics of the I.N.A. used to say over the All-India Radio that since it was working in co-operation with the Japanese it was a "puppet" force. Netaji's reply to this was that the British and French Armies were fighting under exactly the same conditions in France under the command of Gen. Eisenhower. If the British could accept the strategy dictated by the Americans, then how could they criticise the I.N.A. ?

Netaji was absolutely selfless and he never appeared to have any personal ambitions. This was very well demonstrated at a Conference of the Greater East Asia Nations, when Premier Gen. Tojo said in a speech that Netaji would be all in all in Free India. Netaji stood up and told Gen. Tojo that he had no right to make such a statement because it was entirely up to the people of India to decide who would be who in India.

He told him that he was only a humble servant of India and the people who really deserved to be all in all in India, were Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

For him there were no religious or provincial differences. He refused to recognise these. He looked at everyone—Hindu, Muslim and Sikh—without distinction and his spirit animated his men. In the I.N.A. there was no "communal" feeling of any sort in spite of the fact that every man had full liberty to practise his religion in any way he liked. He made his soldiers realize that they were the sons of the same motherland, and, as such, there could be no differences between them. We were all completely united and it was realized by us that the communal differences in our country were the creation of an alien power. The success of this can be gauged from the fact that the most ardent supporters and admirers of Netaji were to be found among Muslims. Netaji respected every man for what he was worth and not for his religion or the province he came from.

It is amazing to see that when Netaji selected one officer from Ger-

many to accompany him during his most hazardous journey to Tokyo by submarine, it was Abid Hussain, a Muslim, that his choice fell upon.

Again, when his troops were sent to the fighting line both the Divisional Commanders were Muslims—Major Gen. M. Z. Kiani and myself. When he went on his last trip to Tokyo by plane in August, 1945, it was Col. Habibur Rehman that he selected to accompany him. This feeling was not confined only to the members of the army. Among the civilians, some of the greatest supporters of Netaji were also Muslims. It was one Mr. Habib, a wealthy merchant of Rangoon, who gave all his property amounting to nearly one crore of rupees for one garland belonging to Netaji. It is on account of these facts that we of the *Azad Hind Fauj* refuse to believe that it is not possible for all Indians to unite and live together like brothers and sisters and work for creation of a great, free, and united India.

He made us realize that we were an army of the starving millions fighting for a very sacred cause. It was this elevation in the character of his soldiers that enabled them to face hardships and fight against almost impossible odds.

He had no private life as such. He used to work from the early hours of the morning till about 2 a.m. daily. At home, he was a most charming personality and a perfect host. He would invite officers to come and play badminton with him. Then he would take some of them to his room, give them his own clothes if they did not have a change and very often he would hold soap or towel for an officer who was having a wash.

To all the Rani of Jhansi Girls he was like a father and was always concerned about their welfare and honour. On one occasion one young lady of the Rani of Jhansi on hearing that her husband had been killed fighting on the front, took poison. Luckily it was discovered in time and she was saved. Netaji detailed two elderly ladies to always accompany her everywhere she went. He too, used to send for her and talk to her for hours consoling her like a father.

Netaji dearly loved his soldiers and was always most concerned about their welfare. He used to go and inspect their kitchens and used to have frequent meals with them. He had issued strict orders that the food cooked for him should be exactly the same as was given to his soldiers. He was always a frequent visitor to Hospitals where he used to send special sweets prepared for them in his own house.

All these qualities and the refusal to bow before the Japanese wishes, his sincerity and devotion to his country, his selflessness and his love of

his soldiers greatly endeared him to his followers and every one of them felt that Netaji was his personal friend and leader for whom it was a privilege to lay down his life.

Every day he used to listen eagerly to the news from India; and when he knew of the terrible famine in Bengal which was taking a heavy toll of valuable human lives, Netaji was greatly perturbed. He was always thinking how he could come to the aid of his starving countrymen, especially the people of Bengal for whom his heart bled. Eventually, he made arrangements for purchasing 100,000 tons of rice from the Siamese and Burmese Governments. He then made an offer of sending this rice to Calcutta under his own arrangement and asked the British to give a guarantee for the safe return of boats and ships bringing rice to India. As he had expected, the British did not reply to this offer. Netaji repeated this offer several times but the British who were not interested in the million that were starving gave no reply.

On another occasion the Japanese Chief of the Gen. Staff came to Netaji and revealed his plan of bombing Calcutta and wanted to know Netaji's opinion on it. Netaji replied that as far as he was concerned he would never like to see his beautiful city with ugly scars of bombing. "Encouragement and hope is what I wish to give to my people and not devastation and sufferings." He advised the Japanese to withhold the bombing of Calcutta. "After Imphal is captured, we will send over Calcutta large formations of Bombers, which will drop not bombs but thousands of Tri-colours to the people of Bengal." "That" Netaji continued, "would destroy the British Imperialism more effectively than bombs."

Netaji was an astute student of International politics. He always played a right card at the right moment, and thus scored over his opponents. Sometimes we were stunned by his masterly discourse on the International situation. In most cases his analysis of the situation turned out just as he had predicted it to us. He was not only the leader of Indians in East Asia but he was acclaimed as the Leader of all people in East Asia. His was the most impressive personality during the Greater East Asia Conference, and he was requested by the Japanese Government to speak to the Japanese people at Habiya Park in Tokyo. It was a real honour, an honour which very few foreigners were accorded, especially at the time when the Japanese were at the height of success and glory. I was told by a few high-ranking Japanese officers that Netaji was a master mind. He was far more experienced than any other statesman in East Asia. I accompanied him to

several meetings and parties and one could easily judge his towering personality and vast experience among the other statesman.

Indian politics was at his finger-tips. He knew men and the Indian leaders and thus he could visualize with ease, the means and ends of all matters which took shape in this country. It was a difficult problem to co operate with the Japanese militarists and especially at the time when everything was moving in their favour but Netaji handled everything too well and so diplomatically that there was never a time when any serious breach occurred, although the lower ranking Indian Officers and Japanese were always at loggerheads. As a matter of fact, our boat of State was almost always in rough water, but its smooth sailing and success was mainly due to its skipper Netaji. I tried to study him and his methods and found him extraordinarily shrewd. Japanese Militarists wanted to help us but at the same time they wanted to influence our actions which were resented all along. After the arrival of Netaji, however, the position changed, and thereafter, the Japanese Militarists were influenced by Netaji to such an extent that no new move was made without consulting him and without his advice. The sudden change in the Japanese policy of domination in China to the policy of friendship was entirely due to his influence. Some of the Burmese, Chinese and Japanese statesmen used to approach him for advice on matters of international politics. He was the champion of all dependant people in East Asia. Greatness is inborn, it is seldom created, and thus, to utilise the inborn qualities to achieve more purpose he must nourish many other auxiliary and supplementary qualities to fit in with the course adopted. Netaji went through the whole course of greatness without any difficulty. He advised all the leaders in the Far East and could explain with ease the mischievous propaganda of the British in those days.

Netaji's most extraordinary move was the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. It was a master move in the game of international politics. The original Indian Independence League could not freely declare war on their enemies and could not co-operate on equal terms with the League of East Asiatic Nations. It was Netaji who foresaw the necessity of equality and thus he declared the inauguration of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. The officers and workers remained the same but this switch-over carried us overnight to the status of a free state and since then the Provisional Government of Azad Hind was recognized by nine Sovereign states as an equal partner in the comity of those nations. We were a refugee Government but our privileges and status was no less than that of any of the Sovereign states there.

At one time the Japanese suggested to Netaji that since the Japanese Army was senior army, when I.N.A. and Japanese officers of equal rank meet Indian Officers should salute first. Netaji was furious at this. He said that would mean that the I.N.A. had accepted an inferior status, which he was not prepared to do. He said they both should salute at the same time. This was accepted by Japanese.

In addition to this the I.N.A. was the only army in East Asia which was not under the Military law of the Japanese. Several times the Japanese approached Netaji and told him that the I.N.A. should also be subject to the Japanese Military Law. Netaji refused staunchly. He told them that the I.N.A. was an independent army. This matter had ultimately to go to Tokyo, where Netaji had his way. Whenever the occasion arose Netaji made it absolutely clear that he would fight only for the independence of India and would never allow itself to be exploited by the Japanese. There were two occasions when the Japanese approached the I.N.A. to fight for them, once in August, 1944, against the Siamese in the area of Chumpong where a small Japanese force was beseiged by the Thais (Siamese), and a second time against the Burmese army in March, 1945, after the Burmese National Army had rebelled against the Japanese. On both these occasions, with the approval of Netaji, the I.N.A. refused to take any action against them.

To keep up our end, Netaji never asked for any facility from Japan which could be provided by the Indians in the Far East. Netaji was approached on this point but he refused to accept any assistance other than the supply of war material. He told the Indian people that he did not want to approach any one as long as they could help themselves. It was for this sincerity that the Indian people showered everything upon him—man-power, money and material wherever he went. Several Indians in the East had brought into practice the slogan of total mobilization. It is seldom, if ever, that people sacrifice their all for the course of which the end is uncertain but Indians of all castes and creed threw in their lot with Netaji and were ready to give whatever was asked from them.

Netaji by organizing Indian Independence League all over East Asia was able to instil a spirit of patriotism in the heart of every Indian, rich and poor alike, and from whom voluntary contributions flowed in freely. As I have mentioned already a large number of Indians among whom were included members of almost every community, gave their all to the *Azad Hind Fauj* and became 'Fakirs' for the sake of their country. Whole families joined the I.N.A., father the I.N.A. Fauj, mother Rani of

Jhansi Regiment and little children Balsena. *Karo sab nichawar, Bano sab Fakir* was the slogan that Netaji gave them and men like Habib Betai, Khanna and numerous others willingly gave all their fortunes amounting to several lakhs to the Azad Hind Government and became *fakirs.* A total sum of 20 crores was collected and deposited in the Azad Hind Bank, Rangoon.

Rich and moneyed people were not only ones that contributed. In fact the greater proportion of our funds was donated by comparatively poor people. It was always the poor labourers, Gwalas, and others like them that made the greatest sacrifices.

I should never forget a scene that I witnessed at one of the meetings addressed by Netaji at Singapore.

After Netaji had finished his speech, he made an appeal for funds. Thousands of people came forward to donate. They formed a queue in front of Netaji, each one coming up on his turn, handed over his donation to Netaji and left. Most of the people who formed the queue were donating large amounts. All of a sudden I saw a very poor labourer woman go up to the stage to hand in her donation. She was in tatters and had even no cloth to cover her head. With abated breath all of us watched her. She took out three rupees notes and offered them to Netaji. Netaji hesitated. She said Netaji "Please accept these. This is all I possess." Netaji still hesitated. Then large drop of tears rolled down his cheeks. He extended his hand and accepted the money from her.

After the meeting was over I asked Netaji why he had hesitated to accept the money from that poor woman and why he had cried. Netaji replied "It was a very hard decision for me. When I looked at the condition of that poor woman, I knew that those three rupees were all the wealth that she possessed and if I took it she would probably suffer terribly but on the other hand when I thought of her sentiment, her desire to give her all for Indian freedom, I felt that if I refused she would feel hurt and probably think that I accepted only large sums from the rich. In the end in order not to hurt her feelings I accepted the money and to me those three rupees have greater value than lakhs contributed by a rich man out of their million."

He was absolutely fearless and did not seem to care for his life, or comfort. He seemed to lead a charmed life for I have personally seen him miss death by inches several times and it is on account of that belief that I can never believe that Netaji is dead. . . . "Netaji Zindabad."



RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE



THE FORMATIVE YEARS *

By ST. NIHAL SINGH

I

Rising from among forest-clad crags close to India's heart, the Mahanadi—the "Big Stream"—seems eager to hurry on to the Bay of Bengal, there to fling herself into the arms of her lord, impatient for her coming. No sooner, however, has she rushed across the wilderness of rock and bush through which she picks her path, than she slackens her pace. Why hurry now? She seems to ask herself. Has her fancy been captivated by the country at which she has arrived?

A pleasant land is this, soft and yielding, gentle in contour and vivid in colouring. To the "Big Stream"—big in bulk rather than length—it is warm to touch and warming to the body.

Loath to leave this lovely locality, the Mahanadi throws out an arm. It is a long, powerful one, bent not unlike an Indian mother's arm as she holds her infant against her left side.

In this crook a settlement has existed since time out of mind. For centuries it was the seat of one ruling dynasty or another. With the Mahanadi and its arm—the Katjuri—ringed round it, it could be easily defended—impregnably fortified, as it was once thought.

Even now it is a capital—not the metropolis of a kingdom, as it once was, but Orissa's governmental seat. Its name—Cuttack—is derived from *kataka*—a *prakrita* (popular language) term, signifying a fort or royal encampment.

II

A half-century ago, when I began slinging ink upon news-sheets, a lawyer, several years older than myself, was fast making his way to the top of the legal ladder in this town far away from the Punjab, where I then lived. Babu Janaki Nath Vasu (Bose, to transliterate the Sanskrit into the lingual form now current) by name, he was, in time, appointed "Government Pleader." This virtually assured him the cream of the professional work of the place.

Orissa formed an integral part of Bengal, as did Bihar. The banes and banalities of the parish pump had not injected the poison of separatism into our people's breast in those days at anything like the pressure now evident. Kindly feelings knit together Oriya and Bengali. Janaki Babu was respected and loved by all.

The law gave him the wherewithal to feed and to clothe his growing family and especially to educate his children as they grew up. Two of his sons—Sarat and Subhas—I was to meet in later years and to esteem. Hence this piece of writing. First, however, I must tell how it came to pass that they inherited the kindly feelings their father had entertained for me: and how that kindly feelings was, in time, to establish contact between them and me.

Beyond the fact that the law was the one fount of gold at which Janaki Babu could fill his little pitcher in broad daylight, it held for him no great interest. His heart had felt the throb of the unitive spirit that had but lately (1885) found manifestation in the Indian National Congress. As time went on, his mind became charged with impulses emanating from the intellectual awakening and the country-wide social revitalization.

By no stretch of the imagination could Cuttack of that day be described as a substation of this newly released energy. Far from it, in fact. It had not yet been linked with Calcutta or Madras by the railway, if my memory serves me aright. Even after it had been, it remained a small "out" station—a *Mofussil* station, to employ the word then more in common use than it is now.

Contact between the outside world and Janaki Babu was, however, established by his passion for current literature. This he had shown from his early years. Those years were distinguished for the publications that sprang up in Calcutta, like the bulbs that send up stalks as the warm breeze woos the earth in which they had lain buried. These sheets sprang up like spring-flowers—no sooner did the stalk shoot up than it was crowned with blossoms. In no time at all the bloom withered and with its withering

the stalk, too, died. Here and there, however, one proved to be hardy and survived the sudden chills—the unpredicted and unpredictable storms.

A son of Bankura who had adventured into the metropolitan world of Calcutta with little else than leonine courage springing from unbounded self-dependence, found himself irresistibly drawn into this newspaper nursery business. Ramananda Chattopadhaya (Chatterjee) by name, he had behind him a long tradition of Sanskritic teaching. He himself took with avidity to Western learning that had been brought to his birthplace by Britons impelled by Christian missionary zeal.

This he did without permitting himself to be alienated from the Muse of India's ancient culture. Even when he had learnt to employ the rulers' tongue with accuracy fluence and ease that even the critical among them applauded, he continued to cultivate the language of his own people and, in the course of some six decades, made no mean contribution to its development. Such contribution was made by him largely through the pages of the *Prabasi.* This he started when the Indian National Congress had barely begun to toddle, but after making sundry experiments in publishing during his college days and immediately afterwards.

It was, however, the *Modern Review*, which he began publishing in 1907, that carried the bairns of my brain to Janaki Babu in Cuttack and brought me his esteem. It brought me his esteem at a stage of life (the early twenties) when the heart hungers for appreciation and the being is nourished and stimulated by a kindly spoken word, even more than by the gold into which the stream of ink flowing from a writer's pen-point is transmuted, assuring, in time, an abundance of creature comforts.

III

In January, 1910, I shifted my journalistic caravan to London. Soon Janaki Babu's second son—Sarat—arrived there. Or was he already there? I cannot now say. Nor does it matter.

Sarat had plumped for his father's profession. As I remember it, he had already obtained the Bachelor's degree in Law as well as the Master's degree in Arts from the Calcutta University. He wished to be called to the bar from one of the Inns of Court.

Students have always been fond of me, perhaps because they feel that I have never ceased to be a student—more particularly a student of the book of life as it is being writ. Whatever the attraction, young persons visit me, often in droves, no matter which quarter of the globe I may be in at the time.

Sarat seemed to stand out from his fellows. I recall his sturdy figure and mobile, expressive, intellectual features. Particularly his eyes. They were large and well-formed. In them was brightness—not of the kind that darts and flashes, but a steady glow that shines, without flash or flicker, from the amber glass fixed in front of a safelight in a photographic dark room.

IV

In half a dozen years of Sarat's departure from London came his brother Subhas. Tidings of his presence there came to me, I believe, from Bhupendra Nath Basu, then a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. It came also from Ramananda Babu's eldest son—Kedar—who had the freedom of our house. The cares of life had not yet closed in upon him and his talk was ever sprightly and amusing.

Subhas had then (1919) only stepped into his twenties. He, however, arrived in England with a reputation. He had felt the touch of *vairagya* while in his mid-teens. Casting aside his books, he had sallied forth in search of a spiritual preceptor. This he found not: but he had a glimpse of Mother India from east to west, north to south.

Subhas's perigrinations to the sacred centres did not, however, give him the reputation that I said had preceded him to London. Renunciation is in the Indian blood. Then, too, he had been bred, born and reared in a soil that, 22 centuries earlier, had witnessed something of a record in renunciation. Into it had ridden, at the head of an irresistible host, a ruler of men who hungered for land and thirsted for power. The sons of the soil who essayed to stop this mad onrush failed in that endeavour. As they were mown down by the sharp swords of the invading charioteers, remorse filled the conqueror's heart. From war he turned to religion. By his zeal in ministering to the human soul, he richly merited the title of Dhamasoka.*

No. It was not his adventure into the ochre-robed figure's spiritual world, as short-lived at it was sudden, that gave Subhas, in those far-away days, the reputation to which I have referred. That reputation sprang from an act that even to him must have been something of a surprise when the passion had spent itself. The man who ran the college in Calcutta that he was then attending was neither of his race, religion or colour. By some

* Asoka the Dutiful, or Asoka the doer of good deeds. I have spelt the word in the form of that day—the form in which it is known to the sons and daughters of Sri Lanka who honour him for causing Buddhism to be brought to their forbears.

word or deed he had outraged Subhas's sense of dignity—national dignity. Without a thought the under-grad belaboured the everweening imperialist in the full sight of his fellows.

No one who knew aught of these episodes really wondered at the act of renunciation that followed in 1920. This time it was an act of political rather than religious renunciation. He would have nothing to do with the I.C.S. for which young Britons as well as Indians hungered.

My own view is that, unlike his other deeds, this was not the result of any sudden ebullition upon his part. To all appearances this resolve was made in the spur of moment shortly after his return to India. Behind that spur however, was a momentum that had been gathering force in him for a long time.

V

Subhas had come to London in the year when O'Dwyer-archy had been rampant in the Punjab more outrageously than even during the war. In the spring of 1919 the Sikhs, who since 1857, had drudged for the Empire whose chattels they had become in 1845, had received the bonus that they had earned for their services in the war just over. Every theatre of operations had been reddened with their blood. In the town that, to them, was their chief theocratic centre, an Irish soldier-man (Brigadier-General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer) excited and impelled by a power-drunk politician (Sir Michael O'Dwyer), likewise Irish, had turned machine-guns upon an inoffensive crowd of civilians—some of them children and even babes in arms—caught in an enclosure (Jallianwala Bagh) with really one egress and that egress occupied by Dyer's myrmidons.*

Every effort upon the part of our people to move Downing Street to chastise the perpetrators of this terrible deed proved unavailing. That shock served, however, to open our eyes to the folly of putting our trust in the foreigner. It impelled us to turn our attention inwards, instead of supplicating the Britons strongly entrenched upon our own resources—our inner resources. The nation began to pulsate with throbs from a heart that had become lionlike by the very terror that had tried to tame it—in fact, to break it.

Through this metamorphosis Subhas was passing in his Cambridge days, as was many another Indian at home and abroad. It was to change his entire course of life. Instead of meekly submitting to serve as a rod

* See the Author's book: RULING INDIA WITH BULLETS AND BOMBS. London, 1919.

in the structure of steel that Britain had girt round India, as he was confidently expected to do, he thenceforward was to use his brain and brawn to shatter it.

As I recall this period in his life : to England Subhas had come as a boy, a great big, overgrown boy. To India he returned, a year or so later, a man, with a mind quickened far beyond his years. He carried back with him a heart heavy with sorrow—sorrow that was not his own: but his fellowman's. His heart was heavy, but not burdened.

How could he let his heart be weighed down? He had much to do —back home. It must buoy him up while he was engaged in that work. Not only him must it buoy up. Others, too. Many others. Many, many others.

Fighting imperialism—that imperialism which had produced those terrors in the Punjab—that was to be his job of work. That job of work could not be done by a man carrying within his breast a sinking heart. Upon return home Subhas found great good fortune awaiting him. Years earlier he had longed for a preceptor. He had, as I mentioned, actually set out in search of one. Success, then denied him by some unseen agency, was now to be his portion. He found the preceptor—only he was a political, not a religious preceptor.

VI

Chitta Ranjan Das—this preceptor of Subhas's—was like a flaming pillar shot from Bengal's soul smouldering with humiliation at India's political helplessness in that hour of national agony. His body burned with the shame that his people had to endure—some of them with sighs, other in silence. Inside that burning body the mind was cool.

It was a lawyer's mind—the quick, inevitably right-thinking mind of a practised lawyer. Some fifteen years earlier that same mind, as yet not very experienced, had been subjected to a terrible ordeal. Against him was ranged the legal talent held in fee by the mighty government astride the province of his birth. A young intellectual who, with his potent pen, had been kindling the fire of patriotism in the hearts of the readers of his paper (the *Bande Mataram*) stood in the dock charged with "waging war against the King-Emperor." Accused of using terrorism as his weapon, Aurobinda Ghosh's neck was deemed by every one to be forfeit to the Crown. By every one save "C.R."—as his familiars affectionately called the barrister. He knew he would save it. He did.

This happened as the first decade of this century was expiring. The

renown that it brought pushed the young lawyer right up to the top of the profession. He needed the fat fees that poured into his cash box. A sense of obligation that would be regarded as quixotic in the country where he had been called to the bar, had made him assume a heavy debt. His family, too, was growing. So was the cost of education. Hangers-on, too, multiplied in geometrical progression—ne'er-do-weels some of whom had been his school-fellows and the like.

A crater opened up under the feet of this successful, carefree, open-handed lawyer with the suddenness that is associated with a volcanic explosion. It was a political explosion—the explosion of O'Dwyer-Dyer's making. It turned Chitta Ranjan Das into the flaming pillar of which I have written. Subhas, after his return to the Motherland, caught sight of this pillar. He embraced it. He, too, became a flaming pillar.

The very first time that I went to Calcutta during my 1921-23 Indian tour I called upon Chitta Ranjan at his residence in Russa Road (so I seem to recall it was then called). He had been released from jail only a day or two before. Hardly had we got to talk when he produced a portrait and asked me in his mirthful way: "Can you tell who is this bearded fellow?" Had he not used that phrase I might not have recognized him. I had never seen C. R. with a long, bushy beard.

VII

"The jail's gift," he gaily commented pointing to the hirsute glory. "Gone with the jail." As he said this he rubbed his hand against his clean-shaven cheek.

Presently in came Moti Lal Nehru, who, at the time, was staying in the house. "If you wish to have a talk with me," he said, "this is your opportunity. I may be arrested any moment."

Subhas, too, was in evidence—very much in evidence. C. R. had found him eager to turn his hand to anything at which he was put. Also able to do anything and everything. His ability to adjust himself to the swiftly changing circumstance had, in fact, surprised even those who had known him to be brilliant—who had reposed the greatest confidence in his intellectual gifts. His capacity for work—his industry—came also as a revelation. His patience, too.

There was any amount of work to be done—in fact, crying out to be done. Shouting slogans at the "satanic government" was not enough. The slogans must be put into practice. The "satanic" imperialist activities must be paralysed—stopped.

Only by organization could the movement upon which the Congress

had embarked be made successful. C. R. put Subhas on to it. To his joy, he found the lieutenant good—remarkably good—at it.

The organizing work had to be done on many fronts. There, for instance, was the educational front. That particular front presented, at the moment, a sorry spectacle. At the leaders' call students had deserted schools and colleges, which, they were told, were cogs in the "satanic government's" machinery. If no work was found for them, they might become a great problem.

So Subhas was set to work to organize a college. Also to teach at that college.

In no time at all, and with hardly any finances, he had an institution running full blast. Students flocked to it. To him, really. He was already their hero.

The hero had more than the magnetism that draws. Much more. He could teach. He DID teach. He was a great success at school-mastering.

Soon he was to be tried in another capacity. Order—not merely peace—had to be preserved at assemblages to which crowds came in numbers unprecedented in the Indian National Congress annals. Subhas was put on that job of work—a man's size of job, as my brother-in-law in the good old United States of America would say. He mobilized the student forces, trained them as civic guards and, on important occasions, himself generaled them.

Greater social work was awaiting him. C. R. Das and Moti Lal Nehru had, between them, worked out a scheme to give the "satanic government" a chance to prove that it was not "satanic." If it would only let them manage the nation's affairs, without hindrance, they would work the machinery set up under the Montagu-Chelmsford Act of 1919.

During this regime—the Swarajist regime—Subhas was given almost unlimited opportunity to modernize as well as to socialize the multifarious civic services. His work, in one capacity or another, at the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, would, in itself, constitute a brilliant record for any man of any race reared in any clime to leave behind him.

I was thousands of miles away from Subhas while he was engaged in these activities. Also when he was clambering up the political ladder, right to the top.

I, nevertheless, kept my long-distance eye over him—and upon Sarat, of whom I shall write on another occasion. I jubilated at the successes he scored and sorrowed at the tribulations to which he was subjected, merely because he hated imperialism and was out to destroy it. Nothing that he

did gripped my heart more than the tender care he took of my old friend Vithalbhai Javerbhai Patel during his last days in exile.

During my present sojourn in the Motherland, far lengthier than I could have imagined in the pre-war years in which it began, I have made frequent visits to Calcutta. Literary rather than journalistic work has taken me thither. These visits have, however, provided me with time and opportunity to renew contact with friends and, in many cases, with their sons and daughters, and to form new associations. Often the whole day and half the night have been spent on these pleasurable and (spiritually speaking) profitable errands.

VIII

One morning I chartered a taxi, as is ever my wont, and was driven citywards from the Howrah railway station, where I was camping in a saloon standing alongside the No. 10 platform. After making several calls I arrived at Sarat Chandra Bose's residence. A young man who came to the portico said that the master of the house was very busy preparing a case for the High Court. The goodness in his heart nevertheless impelled him to take in my card. He had hardly gone when Sarat came out and warmly greeted me. Knowing how he was situated, I sent him back to the corps of lawyers who, I could see from where I stood, were awaiting his return. I would, I promised, return in the evening.

I asked the driver to take me to Subhas's house. A miss of eight or nine, bright and pretty, who, till then, had been a silent spectator, gave the driver the number of Subhas's residence. It was, I think, 38 2, Elgin Road. The emphasis was on the latter part of the number. I was greatly impressed with her sense of exactitude. I wished it had been mine when I was her age—and of others who were of her age and, indeed, much beyond her age.

The house was quite close. Subhas was in—he *had* to be in, I seem to recall. If the police were about as they must have been, there was no evidence of them of which my eyes were cognizant. I, untrained in their ways, however, remarked that in a slave country the myrmidons of the "law" burrow into underground lairs when they are not brazenly bullying.

With alacrity returned the man who had taken my card up a flight of steps visible from the kerb alongside which the taxi had been drawn up. While getting out of it, I said to my life-partner seated in the car: "Do you mind waiting? Subhas is ill. I shall be with him but a few moments."

IX

I felt sheepish when, two hours later, I descended those steps. My good lady is, however, gifted with understanding. As she surmised, during those hours Subhas and I discussed this world and the next. There in that first floor room, with the windows shuttered, he lay in a long, long cane chair that reminded me of the hurricane deck of some steamer cleaving her way across tropical waters. Stretched out upon it lay the figure, so familiar and yet not so familiar.

The time before, when my eyes had fallen upon it, it had been active —super-active. Standing or sitting, it was like a dynamo charged with power and charging with power. The head moved. The fingers pointed to some invisible object in the room. The eyes danced or blazed as the talk went on. The talk was vital.

Now—only a few years later—that figure was prone. Vivacity seemed to have deserted it. The voice sounded weak—almost hollow. There was no gesticulation—no movement of the hand, no dancing of the eye.

That was what prison had done to him. I made that comment—made it to myself—inwardly.

That was the first time I had seen him since his father's passing away. So Janaki Babu had died stripped, by his own hand, of his Rai Bahadurship, I remarked. This was said *apropos* of his refusal to bear an honour given him by officialdom that was, at the time, maltreating our politicals jailed on charges of civil disobedience. It was said by way of consolation.

Upon learning that his father was dangerously ill, Subhas had hurried home from his exile in Europe. Bureaucracy was, however, short-sighted as well as stone-hearted—or was it that the Fates were cruel ? The son did not have a *darshan* of his dying parent. Nor could he accompany the bier to the *shmashan bhumi*, as our forbears called the spot upon which the mortal remains are offered to Agni, the God of Fire, who purifies all that he touches and turns it into clay for the use of Brahma—the Lord of potters.

X

I was for going away. "I shall come some other time," I said, "when you are rested." I did not like using another term, very much on the tip of my tongue.

"No ! No !" he said. "There is much to talk about. I am a little weak but otherwise I am all right."

'He is not," I told myself. "He is far from all right." I stayed on, nevertheless. I, too, wished to talk. Even more so, I wished to listen to him.

Talk—we did. The talk related mostly to the volcano that had erupted in India since my previous visit to the Motherland and was then spouting smoke and belching forth lava.

As the conversation proceeded, he warmed up to it. The languor seemed to slough off him. Vigour came back into his voice. After a while he got up and sat upright in an armchair.

What would his medical attendant say if he were there to see him at that moment? While that question was running through my mind I noticed that his eyes—large and brilliant like Sarat's—were beginning to change with the emotion of the moment. Also that his hands—his fingers—were punctuating points.

In that mood he was disposed to regard his earlier work as footling. He should not have been on terms with the system. Never. If it were "satanic," as it had been openly called, it should have been destroyed —not tolerated—not negotiated with. Why had there been all this complacency upon our people's part—upon the part of the persons acknowledged as leaders, puffed up with pride of leadership? Why had not all the forces been trained upon smashing the imperialist—the "satanic"—system? All the forces....

Yes. The emphasis was upon all. ALL.

Also upon finicking. Why all that finicking about the means to be employed to accomplish the end? Did not the English say that all was "fair in love and war?" He, for one, was both in love with and at war—at one and the same time. In love with the Motherland. At war with imperialism.

It was the change in his own psychology that interested me most. Gone was the mood superinduced by Chitta Ranjan Das and Moti Lal Nehru at Gaya. The "Swarajist" mood, or, as some friends of mine in the Deccan would have it, "Responsive Co-operation-ism." Not an iota of it was left in him.

Yet only a few years earlier he had been intoxicated with it. Drunk with it. DRUNK.

When I came to ponder this, I realized wherein lay his power to pull. It lay in his capacity to become intoxicated with the enthusiasm of the moment. Completely intoxicated.

Was there ever an individual with a greater capacity for enthusiasm—

dynamic enthusiasm—enthusiasm that energizes, activates and does not induce satiety, quiescence, decadence, decay, death.

Little did I know at that moment what was then hovering just round the corner. I had no doubt, to be sure, that there would be a war—a war of revenge upon Germany's part. How could I tell, however, that it was almost upon us? Even if I could, I could not dream of the use Subhas would try to make of that war.

There—there—he sat in front of me—sat in a cage——sat in the cage with the impatience of a caged lion.

XI

Months passed. Or were they only weeks? I cannot say for sure—not from memory at this moment.

All I recollect is that one day—it was in the afternoon, I seem to recall—I happened to be in Gaya. Here, I said to myself, our people had become intoxicated with Swarajism. Among them was Subhas . . .

That thread of thought was suddenly snapped. A train that came rushing and roaring into the station, where I happened to be, did it.

No. Not the train. Many a train had come and gone without interrupting my thinking. I, in fact, derived no end of satisfaction from the belief, amounting to conviction, that no train, no noise, no explosion, could derange the reflective and inductive faculties within me. Fatuous faith in myself !

It was really the crowd that charged the train even before it had come to a full halt, rather than the train itself, which had snapped the thread of my thought. That crowd had in it the content and quality of a whirlwind. It had gathered seemingly out of nowhere. It had gathered without warning. It had gathered with speed not associated with Asia, supposedly slow—lethargic. It moved trainward irresistibly. No one set, by the East Indian Railway, in authority there felt capable of steering it, much less of stopping it. Leastways no one tried to.

I did not have to question anyone as to the why and wherefore of that forgathering. Even before a figure had appeared in the doorway of a compartment, the whole crowd was shouting with one voice : "SUBHAS BABU KI JAI."

I could see, from where I stood, the white cap that is not the least of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's numerous gifts to India. I could see also a white shirt. Only a part—the upper part—of that shirt.

I could see the hands moving. They were gesticulating. They must

be gesticulating, I thought, to emphasize certain words that Subhas—for it was Subhas—must be uttering. I could not make out, however, what he was saying. Nor, for that matter, could the crowd anywhere near me, perhaps none but the persons immediately in front of that open door of the compartment.

What mattered it, however? The mere presence of that man who had been engaged in freedom's battle since his late teens and had suffered —SUFFERED—in the effort to end his people's sufferings, was, in itself, inspiring—exhilarating.

XII

This was the last sight of Subhas that chance—the merest chance—vouchsafed me. So far, I must hasten to add.

Not, however, the last sound of Subhas's voice my ears were to catch. They were to catch it many times.

That piece of good fortune I owe to the little box alongside of which my working hours—nearly all my waking hours, in fact—are spent. Alongside it I sleep so that, from time to time during the night, I may hear what is going on in the wide, wide world from some point proximate to the one where some event deemed worthy of being "put on the air" is taking place. My interest in radio dates back to 1911, when I first met Guglieimo Marconi in an American friend's drawing room in London. I followed its progress from that day to this, becoming more and more dependent upon it for news with split-second freshness.

To a man who is ever shifting the levers and turning the knobs of his radio set, there come surprises. These surprises come often. Sometimes they, in fact, troop in upon him. They do not, however, blunt his desire for them. They act otherwise. They whet that longing.

One night as I was 'fiddling away"—my good lady's expression—with the knobs, accents fell upon my ear that sounded familiar. Who was talking? Some one I knew—of that I felt sure. But who? WHO?

Could it by any chance be Subhas Chandra Bose? It sounded uncommonly like his voice. Judging by the context it must be he. No one else. Only he would be talking in that forthright manner—every phrase instinct with insistent demand for freedom, every sentence punctuated with defiance of the system that held us in subordination. Who else had had the experiences that formed the web upon which the narrative was woven?

Wherefrom was he talking, however? Since he had disappeared from

the room where I had seen him in Calcutta, there had been all sorts of speculation about the manner of his spectacular escape—and about his whereabouts. This, however, was the very first time that his own—his living, dynamic, thrilling, inspiring—voice had been heard by me or by any one else in my (fairly wide) circle.

XIII

Came a time—and that not very long afterwards—when broadcasts from him were frequent. Never so frequent, however, that their content fell away in its captivating quality. Each, in fact, was like an instalment in a serial that keeps the interest awakened—alive. Ever mounting, indeed.

Soon it developed that he was actually on the offensive against imperialism and not merely at war, as he had been for a long, long time. Shoulder to shoulder with him stood phalanx upon phalanx of our own people, he announced. Thousands of them. The number was ever increasing. Also funds. Merchants were giving him money—giving it out of their plenty rendered, for the first time, mobilizable by patriotism. Women—our own women—were melting their ornaments to help to finance the movement he had organized for India's liberation. They were doing more—far more. They had fared forth from the home into the firing line of the Indian National Army. A whole battalion of them—exclusively of women—had been recruited.

Came a time when the voice from across the Bay of Bengal did not ring with joy—exaltation. What was worse, that ring could not be there.

There now was pain—anguish. Pain that reverses bring. Anguish at the loss of comrades—causes.

Pain, yes. Anguish, yes. No sense of despair, however. No desolation. No weakening of faith in Free India's destiny. None whatever. Never.

Soon that voice which now was sarcastic—now defiant—which ever was inspiring, ceased to come through....

A little later the ether belched forth tidings that sickened even the foe. I mean the foe who, at heart, was freedom's friend, howsoever he, through the weakness to which flesh is heir, opposed the Indian movement for liberation. I say the foe. No friend pinned his faith to the news: for in his sight Subhas—Netaji Subhas—was and is immortal—not subject to death,



Maj Gen Loganadhan talking to children after a public meeting at Sanghai, September, 1943

A SAINT TURNS PATRIOT

By KALI CHARAN GHOSH

The Handicap

It is extremely difficult—and perhaps the time is still inopportune—to write about a person whose death is disputed and who may be the unfortunate or fortunate reader of his own obituary. A man who disappeared from a house closely guarded day and night by one of the most efficient police forces in the world through his own ingenuity, who carried with him in January, 1941, the support and sympathy of a legion of admirers as well as the jealousy and spite of a large number of front rank political leaders and of their huge following, and who in days became noted for his subsequent deeds of daring, resourcefulness, power of organisation and illimitable capacity for suffering and sacrifice, is one who can extort admiration but baffles any effort in making a proper appreciation of his enigmatic personality. Every man and woman belonging to the Congress Party and other political organisations having had the fortune of working with or under him has his (or her) own ideas about the man and it is, therefore, wellnigh impossible to get over the bias, for and against him while trying to paint a picture of him in its true colours and in its real perspective. He was a common man, yet so uncommon, who was one of the many, yet aloof with his own personality, spotless moral character, indomitable will, dauntless courage and an unbending determination to fight against odds.

There are a few of his friends who are mightily swayed between hopes and fears whether Subhas who is to them like one

"Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high and higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire;

And still thinks of 'one who was his earliest mate':

> Who ploughs with pain his native lea
> And reaps the labour of his hands,
> Or in the furrow musing stands;
> 'Does my old friend remember me?'

To such friends it is always a pang and a pleasure to recount in memory the many thousand companion-hours replete sometimes with events that moulded the course of history and which can only be cherished in the innermost heart as a priceless treasure and cannot be confided even to the most intimate of friends.

Presuming that Subhas is dead—the fact that an outspoken narration of his shortcomings may wound the susceptibilities of not only his millions of admirers who have seen him in flesh and blood but also the finer sentiments of the author himself, acts as a brake against a proper assessment of all his qualities. There is yet time when a complete picture of Subhas who combined in him the qualities of Shivaji with Vivekananda, will come out to serve as an inspiration to both the ordinary and uncommon people who will come forward to serve the motherland.

Still the life history of this great man has to be told when the memory is fresh and vivid, when authentic reports are still available and time has not been afforded an opportunity to spin fairy tales about events that occurred in the ordinary human way.

Early Influences

Nobody can venture an explanation as to how certain events happen in a particular way or how forces subscribe precisely to their culmination in a particular manner. It is more difficult to do so in cases of men who while disappearing from the face of the earth like so many millions of bubbles in the sea shore, leave some with a celebrity which sustains through the ages. There are scores of instances when greatness has cropped up in the midst of the most uncongenial circumstances, under conditions extremely unfavourable for a healthy growth to manhood, where there is nothing to draw upon the family traditions and where the sum total of the family influence is nothing but a colossal hindrance to normal development. "Chill penury repressed the noble rage" in many millions. There are countless instances where physical and mental deficiency had been a drag throughout life. But the number of men who have attained the fullest stature of manhood under these circumstances are rather limited. Of

course, they are a class by themselves whom nothing can daunt, nothing can restrain and nothing can hush into obscurity.

Subhas has had the advantage of being born in a family of affluent circumstances and there were everything around him which when properly cultivated tend to contribute to the normal growth of man. But there must have been something more than these factors in him which have made him the idol of the nation, and his name to be remembered through the ages. Not that every child that was born in Cuttack or in other parts of the world on the date and at the time when Subhas was born under kindred or more agreeable circumstances reached or approached a position close to the eminence that is Subhas's own. It is the innate quality of the man together with the several factors mostly undefinable that had furnished the many steps which he treaded to reach the pinnacle of glory. As an ordinary chronicler we can at most analyse the value of some factors which usually affect the life-history of man.

Besides the advantage of pecuniary sufficiency in the family, Subhas was most fortunate in having Janaki Nath as his father and Prabhabati as his mother, Satish, Sarat, Suresh, Sudhir, Sunil as his elder brothers. Subhas was the sixth son of his parents with Sailesh and Santosh Chandra following him as his younger brothers. The family further consisted of his six sisters, cousins, a number of maternal uncles and other relatives. There were a lot of domestic servants, both male and female. and in those days they formed a part of the family. The bond of affection with them was very close and some of them were held in high esteem by the children of the house. In fact, one of the maid-servants, Sarada by name, was particularly fond of Subhas—the attachment was reciprocal,—and bestowed her loving care on him till her death. An atmosphere of learning, culture, peace and tranquillity, charity and implicit faith in God pervaded the house of Janaki Nath and religious observances in the most orthodox style was a feature in a family which had accepted many changes in the old ideas and brought about many modifications in the mode of living in the earlier days of Janaki Nath.

But the most outstanding influence was what Janaki Nath, and to a large extent mother Prabhabati, wielded on their sons and other inmates of the house and we should, for a proper assessment of the nobility of Subhas's character, make a particular study of Janaki Nath's many qualities of head and heart. It is not an exaggeration to say that Janaki Nath was loftier than the height of the combined eminence of his great sons and there was something more in the man which his most illustrious sons could never acquire.

JANAKI NATH

Janaki Nath was the fourth son of Haranath Basu of village Kodalia in the district of 24-Perganas in Bengal. He had three elder brothers, Jadu Nath and Kedar Nath by the same mother and Devendra Nath by his stepmother. Sita Nath, the youngest, died at an early age. Hara Nath was indigent to a degree when his sons were born but he defied poverty with an admirable calm and with the sense of great responsibility that rested on him. The people around knew him to be as one who had acquitted himself well in the struggle of life.

Janaki Nath was born on May 28, 1860, and had his early education in the Harinabhi Anglo-Sanskrit School. It was a time when Kodalia, situated ten miles south of Calcutta, and its adjoining villages, *viz.*, Harinabhi, Changripota, Mahinagar, Malancha and Rajpur, were having a renaissance in literature, art, religious discourse, music and the like. There was a tremendous revival of learning in Sanskrit literature and the way was paved by Bhārāt Chandra Siromoni, of Langalberia—a village three miles south of Kodalia. Born in or about 1810 he at an early age became a Professor in the Sanskrit College of Calcutta. He was a great commentator of Hindu Law and an outstanding authority on the Dayabhag or the Bengal School. For many years his books on the subject, Dattaka-Chandrika and Dattaka-Mimamsa were consulted for proper guidance on the subject. He had other literary works to his credit and he was able to create an atmosphere of Sanskrit studies around him. There were many other Sanskrit scholars at that period and the two immediate followers of Siromoni Mahasaya need special mention. Ananda Chandra Vedantabagish, (born in or about 1817), true to his surname was a great Vedantist and wrote extensively on the Vedas and Upanishadas and had had his own commentary on Geeta. He was a voluminous writer and a finished speaker on Vedanta. His association with the leading Brahmos was very close and in course of time he became the Editor of the great vernacular journal, 'Tattwabodhini Patrika'.

The birth of Pandit Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan marks an epoch in not only villages all around Changripota, a village contiguous to Kodalia, but also in the Bengali life and literature. Born in 1820 in an orthodox Brahmin family he from early boyhood became an attraction of the village by his robust health, love for studies and towering personality over his friends and associates. He is best known as the Editor of 'Soma-Prakasa' (first published in 1857) which in those days was marked by its bold views on politics, social customs, literature and on other kindred subjects. The literary style of 'Soma-Prakasa' was almost a model and was a great deal

in advance of its time. Dwarkanath's influence was tremendous on his co-villagers and also on a larger public in Bengal. His genius was simply versatile. In the literary world he has left an indelible mark writing copiously in Sanskrit and in Bengali, in both prose and verse. But for the villagers his contribution towards the spread of education is something more than what had been said before. He succeeded in amalgamating two or three then existing obscure schools of the locality and turned them into one and efficient organisation and accommodated them in 1866 in the building which still houses the institution. The first thing he did was to recruit eminent educationists of the day for the school and was fortunate in securing the services of Woomesh Chandra Dutt of hallowed memory first as Assistant Head Master and then as Head Master of the School. He took charge of the school in 1869, and in the very next year the School was able to secure two Government Scholarships through Ramanath Ghosh and Shyama Charan Ghosh.

Advent of Woomesh Chandra in the placid calm of the village atmosphere was a revolution so to say and brought about many changes in the thought world of his innumerable disciples of Harinabhi and the neighbouring villages. It is a known fact that his influence spread far beyond the limits of his centre of business activities. He is known as the founder of the City College, as having something to do with the starting of the Deaf and Dumb School and as one of the stalwarts of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. He started "Bamabodhini Patrika" a journal, rather the first in the line, devoted to the welfare of women. His saintly mien, his erudition, toleration, love of truth, and sympathy for the poor and the afflicted made him something higher than an ordinary man. The persecution which he suffered at the hands of orthodox people of the locality for the mere ideas that he held about God and a modest but stern attempt to establish at Harinabhi a home for the Brahmo Samaj brought him closer to his pupils and his friends. Woomesh Chandra moulded the mind of the students as it were made of clay and helped them in bringing forth whatever was best in them. In fact, the period in which Janaki Nath and his associates were coming of age was the era of Woomesh Chandra.

SIVANATH

Next to Woomesh Chandra, Sivanath Sastri held the youngmen of Kodalia and the adjoining villages greatly attracted to him. Sivanath's ancestral home was at Mozilpur, the same as that of Woomesh Chandra and is situated ten miles south of Kodalia. Sivanath, a sister's son of

Dwarka Nath, was born at the latter's Changripota residence on January 31, 1847. A brilliant scholar of the Calcutta University, he was early drawn to Brahmo religion, became initiated on August 22, 1869, and spent the greater part of his life in preaching the new faith. He came to Harinabhi as the Head Master and Secretary of the Harinabhi Anglo-Sanskrit School in 1873, became the Editor of 'Soma-Prakasa' and remained there for two years. He has left a mass of excellent literature both in prose and verse in Bengali. His lofty character, vast knowledge, persuasive eloquence and genial temperament endeared him to his friends and pupils. Janaki Nath could not escape the influence of Sivanath in the early days of his life.

There were other influences at work which deserve special, though brief, mention. A galaxy of literature crowded the period that preceded and followed Janaki Nath and some of them were remarkable for learning and are treated as pioneers in their line. Ramnarayan Tarkaratna of Harinabhi (b. 1822) was the first to write Bengali drama in modern Bengali and had another dozen dramatic works to his credit. He was also a fluent writer in Sanskrit, produced many Sanskrit books and died as a Professor of the Sanskrit College. Girish Chandra Vidyaratna (b. 1822) of Rajpur was another teacher of the same college. He is an author of many works in Sanskrit and Bengali. Ramnarayan Vidyaratna, an influential member of the Vernacular (Literary) Society and Professor, Fort William College, Abhaya Charan Tarkalankar of Changripota, Professor of St. Xavier's College, Ramsarbaswa Vidyabhusan of Kodalia (b. 1843), Professor, Metropolitan, Bangabasi and the Ripon College, Tarakumar Kabiratna, Professor, Rajshahi and Metropolitan College and a host of others were not only great scholars themselves but each of them had literary productions which have stood the test of time.

Closer to Janaki Nath were Pundits Harish Chandra Kaviratna of Rajpur, Professor, Presidency College, Kalikrishna Bhattacharyya of Harinabhi (b. 1849), Vice-Principal, Metropolitan College, Matilal Bhattacharyya of Harinabhi (b. 1852), Professor Agra College and Director of Public Instruction, Udaipur. We have mentioned Ramanath Ghosh and Shyama Charan Ghosh in connection with successful teaching of Woomesh Chandra. Ramanath afterwards stood first in Sanskrit in M.A. Examination and secured the title of 'Saraswati'. He became Professor, in a very early age, of the Dacca College. He translated some portion of the Rig Veda in English, against his mother's protests, the old lady clinging to the belief that the translation of the sacred books of the Hindus in a *mlechha bhasa* (unholy language) would spell disaster. As it happened, Rama-

nath died at the early age of 26, and the lady would recount the mistake of her son which had left her mourning throughout her long existence.

Of the giants that surrounded the person of Janaki Nath and influenced his after-life, Dwarkanath, Woomesh Chandra, Ananda Chandra Vedantavagish and Sivanath Sastri, enjoyed a very considerable share. Though Vidyabhusan Mahasaya was not a Brahmo himself, he held very liberal views about religion and allowed his nephew (sister's son) Sivanath to adopt a theological belief which was near to his heart. The Brahmo spirit of the other three engulfed Janaki Nath and his associates, all of whom were older than him, and the most important traits of Janaki Nath's character, toleration of other man's views, had its root deep down in the tenets of Brahmoism and the examples set before him by his great teachers. In later life almost every sect of the Hindu religion claimed him as its votary and those who knew Janaki Nath also knew this that he accepted what was best in every religion, Christianity and Islam not excluded and he practised the fundamental principles of all of them throughout life.

One man more than anybody else influenced the life of Janaki Nath and he was his stepbrother and a short notice of him is deemed necessary.

Devendra Nath, who became in subsequent years the Principal of the Krishnagore College, showed signs of greatness, intellectual and moral, from very early youth. He also imbibed the influence of Brahmoism from Woomesh Chandra, Krishna Behari Sen and others. By his transparent honesty, love for truth and his fellow beings, by his spirit of service to his students and the community at large he endeared himself to any one who would happen to come in contact with him. He was one among the band of great men who heralded the dawn of Swadeshi. He would never write a single foreign word while writing or speaking in vernacular. While discussing with a young man of his village, long after his retirement from service, about the progress of the charitable dispensary at Kodalia founded by the munificence of Shri Sarat Chandra Bose, he heard the word 'average' in connection with the daily attendance of indigent patients. Immediately he pulled up the young man asking very mildly whether there was no vernacular word for 'average'. Such was the love for learning in him that a few months after his marriage he would not allow his young wife, then only a girl of twelve, to enter his room unless she had agreed to take a regular course of study from him. The matter came before the mother of Devendra Nath who disliked the idea of 'torture', as she used to call it, and asked his son to come to a compromise with his wife. Nothing availed; and in course of time the young wife came to learn so much of the Bengali and

English literature, and something of Sanskrit also, that she proved to be worthy of an educationist of the highest order. Devendra Nath was something more than a brother to Janaki Nath. When acting as the Head Master of the Cuttack Collegiate School, he took Janaki Nath with him to Cuttack and from the Ravenshaw College, Janaki Nath passed his F.A. and B.A. examinations.

After finishing his education with the degree of law in Calcutta, Janaki Nath started life as a teacher in a school at Jaynagar, ten miles towards south of Kodalia. But his talents sparkled in the legal profession to which he was drawn by the influence of one of his relatives through marriage, Hurry Ballav Bose was the name of the gentleman, and shifted to Cuttack. He soon made his mark by dint of his legal acumen and became the leader of the bar within a very short time. He was elected non-official Chairman of the Cuttack Municipality in 1901, and made Government Pleader and Public Prosecutor in 1905. For his expert knowledge of Orissa Tenancy law he was nominated to the Bengal Legislative Council in 1912 when Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam formed a single Province. In the same year he was made Rai Bahadur in recognition of his services to society. He was a man of sturdy independence, and his iron determination wore a cloak of politeness all his own, and as a result of his difference with the District Magistrate he severed his connection with the Government in 1917 and ceased to represent them in the Civil and Criminal Courts. In response to the call of the country he renounced his title and became simple Janaki Nath, the adored of the people.

But Janaki Nath's greatness lies elsewhere. He was a man of unbounded charity and in this respect his poverty in childhood was the most important spring of action in him. He never forgot the difficulties which he had experienced in securing the requisites of an educational career and there was never a student, whether in Cuttack or elsewhere, who had come away from his doors without his hopes being fulfilled. There was never a poor relative who had not had a regular remittance from him. It was never late in coming and never intermitted. For nearly quarter of a century the poor people of Kodalia and of villages ten miles around had to depend partly on his charities for their living, for educational expenses in the family and for meeting social liabilities. All institutions, charitable, educational or religious, were dependent on his munificence. Roads were repaired, tanks reclaimed, jungles removed and all sanitary methods for the improvement of the health of the locality carried out at a cost the major portion of which was met from his contribution.

Charitable persons are there but few shared the sympathy which Janaki Nath nurtured all the poor. His heart would melt at the suffering of others. He would hear interminable stories of woe without annoyance, without weariness and at the end would try to do whatever lay in his power. Time permitting, ignoring the conditions of health and comforts, he would visit the houses of afflicted friends and relatives and share their sorrow. He would clasp the orphaned children of a deceased friend in his arms, there being no consideration of the status of them, weep over their heads and ask them to depend on God and promise such help as would mitigate their suffering.

During the Pujas, he would invariably visit the village, stay there for four days and associate with all classes of people in a manner which had no parallel. On very few occasions he would distribute charity in public and this was one of such occasions. People would relate their tales of misery, he would hear them attentively and meet their wants. Of all his sons, on such occasions as he would be present, young Subhas would sit by his father speechless and Janaki Nath would place the gift in his hands to be distributed to the poor. In this way Subhas imbibed disposition for charity from his father. A genuine love for the village regarding the welfare of which his great father harboured such great solicitude, grew up in him.

Janaki Nath loved every man in every sphere of life and he cherished sincere regard for those who were older than him in age or had in some form or other rendered a bit of service to him in his difficult days. Like the British Premier Mr. Chamberlain he would carry his umbrella with him even while passing under thick foliage of trees in the village, visit the houses of relatives and erstwhile friends and to make obeisance even touch the feet of his elders irrespective of caste or creed. He would administer mild rebuke to those who due to old age or infirmity would at great personal discomfort, become running for his *darshan*, with the remark that as he himself had intended to visit their respective houses, it was unnecessary to take the trouble of coming to him. He possessed a wonderful memory and would ask about the welfare of the members of the families of his relatives by name. In connection with social functions held in Calcutta he would invite each family of the village to participate in the joy of the function. He would receive every visitor from his village himself for the reason that they might not get the requisite attention from his men in Calcutta with its atmosphere of pomp and grandeur.

Deep within the outward form lay hidden a soul that transcended the qualities of which people had no knowledge. Channing has said:

"A man is great as a man, be he where or what he may. The grandeur of his nature turns to insignificance all outward distinctions. His powers of intellect, of conscience, of love, of knowing God, of perceiving the beautiful, of acting on his own mind, on outward nature, and on his fellow-creatures, these are glorious prerogatives"

and this sentiment is perhaps nowhere more aptly applicable than in the case of Janaki Nath. He wore a divine smile which would melt all opposition, all hostility. He would conquer foe with love and in fact, in this wide world, where his multifarious activities brought him in contact with innumerable men in different spheres of life, *he had no enemies* or detractors even. The vile tongue of calumny failed miserably to touch him. He would stand calm when disasters grimly awaited him and the family. In fact he not only studied the Geeta but practised its most difficult teachings in a reverent spirit. People who had had the good fortune of knowing him intimately, wondered why Janaki Nath had not been known to a still larger public than the circle where he was actually known. It is because the inner man was greater than his outward form. He cherished a distaste for publicity and most of his benevolent acts were done silently in a spirit of humility.

His living example was an inspiration to his sons and he never exercised his judgment against his son's wishes when they were for public good.

Wrote Janaki Nath to Subhas Chandra when the latter had decided to resign the Indian Civil Service:

"Now that you have decided to serve the country, may God bless you."

And Subhas's reply was equally remarkable:

"Father, I never felt more proud of you than today."

Isn't it difficult to assess who is greater, the father or the son?

The Boyhood Days

Subhas inherited the two most outstanding qualities in his parents, *viz.*, the saintliness of the father and piety of the mother and these were in great evidence in Subhas's character. It was for this reason that the life and times of Janaki Nath have been discussed in some detail in the previous chapter. There was a time when his relatives and friends entertained an idea that Subhas might renounce the world and lead the life of a monk.

Subhas was the ninth child of his parents, five brothers and three sisters preceding him, and the date and time of his birth has been recorded in the diary of Janaki Nath in the following manner :

"Subhas Chandra Bose at Cuttack 23rd January, 1897, at a few minutes after 12 a.m. bet. 12 and 1 p.m.—11 magh, 1303." Though a faith in astrological calculations was in great vogue in Janaki Nath's family, but yet, probably because of the number of children, an entry of the exact time of Subhas's birth was not done.

In the large growing family that was surrounding Subhas he was lost, as it were, in the peculiarity of his position. The elders claimed more attention of his parents by virtue of their age and the youngers, by their greater helplessness.

Modest, rather shy by nature, Subhas was never able to thrust himself to any special attention of his parents. He unwillingly adjusted himself to his peculiar position in spite of himself. An atmosphere of gravity reigned around his father, much of whose time was occupied with his professional work and multifarious social and public duties. He was somewhat unapproachable to the boys in the ordinary working days and the common manifestations of affection to his children were rather occasions of uncommon happenings. Highly affectionate to his children and also to quite a number of other dependents he could never be rough, never be rude to them, but he never allowed his love for them to degenerate into an weakness which might encourage indiscipline or delinquency in his wards.

With the mother his position was no better. He was quickly followed by three sisters and two brothers and was therefore forced to make room for others in the mother's care. He yearned for the lap for a much longer time, for the lap which he had most unwillingly to vacate. Besides the younglings, his mother had to look after a large number of other relations and dependents in the family together with a regular stream of guests for whom the doors of Janaki Nath were always wide ajar. She was a lady who commanded respect and even her motherly tenderness had to be treated with deference. Subhas inwardly longed for a closer and more intimate relation with his parents, but for reasons mentioned above this he could never achieve. The situation brought him closer to Sarada to whose exclusive care he was relegated. She was a good lady, hailing from the Hooghly district, and tried as much as possible to compensate for any deficiency in the mother's attention. Subhas was extremely happy with the attention he received from her. Sarada used to call him 'Raja' or king and would command other attendants of the house to do the same.

With the brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins, Subhas's relations were extremely cordial but his sensitive nature gave him an idea of insignificance which he nurtured in his heart in silence. He grew up amongst those who had been doing well with their studies securing the remark 'Conduct—Good', not fair, not tolerable, in the progress report of the schools. He was soon drawn towards the second brother, Sarat Chandra whose individuality became very marked even in his childhood. Sarat Chandra was rather precocious in his studies having passed the Entrance Examination a few months after his twelfth birthday. Sarat Chandra's debating skill while in school was appreciated by young Subhas and he tried to cultivate it in himself.

In the school, the Protestant European School, he was a quiet busy boy doing much better than what his brothers had done before him. He developed a sense of high regard for his teachers, some of whom were exceedingly nice to him. He was dear to most of his schoolmates but the racial arrogance of some of them made him from that age a hater of the nation to which the boys claimed their origin. He was there for three years only, entering it while only five, and at the time he was transferring his allegiance to the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, the rumblings of the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal were reaching the ears of youngsters in different parts of India. To the lingering impression of racial arrogance was added the sense of injustice and exploitation by the foreigners against which Bengal was up in arms.

Amongst the various influences that worked on Subhas in his early youth, that of Sj. Benimadhab Das, the Head Master of the School was of considerable importance. It added to the existing stock of his moral qualities inherited from and subsequently inculcated by the parents through precepts and example. Subhas cherished the highest regards for Beni Babu and he was visibly moved whenever through chance the *guru* and his disciple had occasions to meet.

In the formative period of Subhas's life the influence of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda marks a chapter by itself. The atmosphere of Janaki Nath's house was congenial to the reception of the religious ideas of Ramakrishna as Janaki Nath himself entertained the highest respect for the moral teachings of every religion. Subhas became steeped in Vivekananda's ideas and many of his speeches in after life breathe a true spirit of Swamiji's ideals.

Without a reference to his boyhood activities the chapter will remain incomplete. In the house of Janaki Nath it was not unnatural for Subhas

to become charitably disposed towards the poor. It was certainly something unnatural for him to try to personally serve the poor, the diseased and the afflicted with his own hands, born as he was in a family that could be termed as 'aristocratic' in a very loose sense of the word. Nevertheless, Subhas at the beginning would visit the houses of the poor without the knowledge of his parents and brothers, but before long it became known to the family and the associates of Subhas that if it was not physically impossible, he would nurse and tend the suffering and the sick even when epidemics of cholera, small-pox, etc., would be raging in the town and the distant rural areas. It was not uncommon for him to trudge on foot long distances from home to visit the scourged areas and spend days and nights by the bedside of patients bringing succour to them in the shape of medicaments and diet, courage in despair and consolation in bereavement. More often than not he himself would be coming back exhausted, pale and weak, and his body badly needing rest.

His power of organisation was in evidence in the formation of a body of selfless workers from amongst his classmates who would ungrudgingly follow his advice and example and this band of workers became known over an area much larger than their age would justify. It is not known to many that in addition to rendering service where service was needed, these young boys took the vow of celibacy and perhaps with the exception of Subhas himself every other comrade of his had fallen from the great ideal.

But Subhas would not neglect his studies. This he could not do because of the presence of brothers and uncles who had systematically been doing well. He would not spend long hours over his studies, at a stretch, but would snatch just sufficient time to prepare his lessons. He could work hard when necessary. For success in life for mediocre men, he was a believer in patient labour, and he used to think himself as one belonging to this group. He did not like his friends to be 'book-worms and gold medal-lists' by the sheer stroke of chance or at the sacrifice of health but would desire them to persevere in studies leaving the result to the future. When he stood second in order of merit at the Matriculation Examination in 1913 from the Ravenshaw Collegiate School it was a surprise to many not excluding his own self.

His College Days—The Foundation of a Great Career

With the passing of the Matriculation Examination his relations with Cuttack almost ceased. He took his admission into the Presidency College,

Calcutta, and seriously engaged himself in his studies. The first thing he did, after close contact with his classmates, some of whom had competed in the examination, was to organise a debating society in which he took a prominent part. At this time he formed the nucleus of a student organisation which he desired to be able to make valuable contribution to the all-round progress of the country and improvement of the status of the students themselves.

"My first love in life was the eternal call of the Himalayas", wrote Subhas in April 1939. This 'call of the Himalayas' lured him out of his home in the early part of 1914. He travelled far and wide visiting the several pilgrim centres in Northern India in quest of a *guru*, a religious preceptor, who would guide him straight through the circuitous ways of worldly existence. He came back disappointed in June of the same year. With the high moral background presented by his parents, instinctive and innate moral tone of his nature, deep studies in religious literature specially of the Ramakrishna Order, it was very difficult for him to find a *guru* who could bring him spiritual bliss. Even at that early age he had realised that the call of 'duty' was only 'relative', when the 'call' had come from a still higher plane, the 'lower calls' would silently seek their proper places. Young Subhas told his father, a highly educated and religious-minded man, that it was possible for man to realise the truth that 'Brahma (God) is Eternal and everything else, flitting or evanescent.' He had clear idea that "the knowledge of God destroys the urge for 'work' that binds one to the world." He had faith in the saying that "there were people who had realised the eternal truth and they have left hopes for the common man of realising the same truth with their own efforts."

The ideals of Vivekananda were nearest to his heart, said Subhas to his father.

On May 6, 1932, from the Seoni Sub-jail to Mr. A. R. Bhatt of the *Mahratta*, Subhas wrote his impressions about Swamiji and the high place Subhas had reserved for him in his heart. "I cannot write about Vivekananda without going into raptures" said he. It is difficult to say which of the qualities of Swamiji appealed to Subhas most, but from the activities of Subhas's life, it is possible to make an idea that Sister Nivedita's words about Swamiji "The queen of his adoration was his Motherland" were liked by Subhas, and he chose the thorny path of a patriot in preference to that of a monk. He was attracted by the Swamiji's personality and said "If he had been alive (in 1932), I would have been at his feet." About Swamiji's 'personality' Subhas wrote:

"His personality was high, profound and complex and it was this personality—as distinct from his teachings and writings—which accounts for the wonderful influence he had exerted on his countrymen and particularly on Bengalees. This is the type of manhood which appeals to the Bengalee as probably none other. Reckless in his sacrifice, unceasing in his activity, boundless in his love, profound and versatile in his wisdom, exuberant in his emotions, merciless in his attacks but yet simple as a child—he was a rare personality in this world of ours."

Swamiji's unbounded love for his countrymen filled Subhas's heart. Both of them loved the common people and this love knew no barrier of caste or creed, of the rich and the poor and in fact overflowed every earthly barrier. Subhas's views on Swamiji has been admirably expressed and with a great warmth of feeling:

"And his (Swamiji's) love for his down-trodden people! That was ocean-like. Do you remember that message of his, 'Say brothers, the naked Indian, the illiterate Indian, the pariah Indian is my brother'. . . . 'Say brothers, at the top of your voice—India's good is my good,—And pray day and night, Oh, Thou Lord of Gouri, Oh Thou Mother of Strength,—take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness and make me a man !' "

Subhas was a devotee of Shakti—the perennial source of Strength, physical and moral,—and he was immeasurably drawn towards Swamiji for the latter's adoration of Shakti. About Swamiji "who consecrated his whole life to the moral and spiritual uplift of his nation and humanity" Subhas wrote in his inimitable style:

"Swamiji was a full-blooded masculine personality—and a fighter to the core of his being. He was consequently a worshipper of Sakti and gave a practical interpretation to the Vedanta for the uplift of his countrymen. 'Strength, strength is what the Upanishads say'—that was a frequent cry of his. He laid the greatest stress on character-building."

Subhas kept Swamiji's ideals before him and shaped his future career on this model.

He came back from his sojourn in search of a *guru* exhausted and before he could recover from the fatigue of his travel he was down with typhoid and in a few days found hovering between life and death. His life was spared and he was sent to Kurseong to convalesce. Before he had regained his former health he decided to sit for the next I. A. Examination and to the surprise of all stood high in order of merit in the first division.

He again took his admission into the Presidency College with honours in Philosophy. Two events which indicated the future career, however hazily, of Subhas occurred in the third year class. He joined the University Training Corps the first manifestation of his craving for a soldier's life; and the other is the assault on a European Professor of the College, Mr. F. C. Oaten by his students in the college building.

To discuss the last incident first, it is publicly known that he was rusticated from the Presidency College for his alleged complicity in the crime of assaulting the English Professor. Subhas noticed in Mr. Oaten the same racial arrogance of his European classmates in the Cuttack Protestant School in an aggravated form and some of his friends thought of teaching the professor a lesson in decent behaviour to a people which according to Subhas, had a great past and has a still glorious future. In analysing the cause of this attack about fifteen years after the incident Subhas would say that to the Western people "physical force alone makes an appeal. It is not generally realised by Britisher that it is they who have been primarily responsible for teaching the Indian people the efficacy of physical force." There was a time when people were insulted without having had any remedy from any quarters and moreover "no Indian with a grain of self-respect could help feeling the humiliation of being under a foreign government."

Subhas writes: "Then the time came when Indians began to hit back and when they did so, the effect was immediate and remarkable." In the same context, referring to the 'Oaten incident' he says, "Even in the colleges in Calcutta, British members of the staff would often be guilty of insulting behaviour towards Indian students and the fact that today such cases are not frequent, is because *Indian students also made use of physical force in upholding their self-respect.*" (Italics mine).

The incident created a furore in Calcutta, nay in the whole of India. Subhas's name was whispered as one who had been, if not in the direct assault at least among those who had hatched the plan. Shri Satish Chandra Bose, M.A., B.L., Bar-at-Law, the eldest brother of Subhas, has written about the latter in the following language:

"Subhas maintained a sphinx like silence regarding the names of the

students who had joined in the assault on penalty of rustication for life. A full Committee of Enquiry sat to enquire into the causes of assault. Young Subhas was called by the Committee to make a statement. The Committee also wanted an assurance from him that the offence would not be repeated. Subhas declined to give any undertaking and said that if any professor behaved in that manner, he would meet with the same fate. Subhas was thereupon rusticated." (From 'Milap' of Lahore).

The punishment meted out to Subhas was the most outstanding gift which the University Authorities and the Government of Bengal could make to the nation. It gave young Subhas the first 'joy derived from suffering for a cause' and on this his 'future career had been chalked out once for all.'

On December 1, 1929, presiding over a Students' Conference Subhas made the following remarks on the incident:

"I have my doubts as to whether I am really competent to preside over a Conference of Students—for, judged from the point of view of "good conduct", my University career is not without a stain. I still remember very clearly the day when my Principal summoned me to his presence and announced his order of suspension and his words still ring in my ears—"You are the most troublesome man in the College." That was indeed a red-letter day for me—in many respects a turning-point in my life's career. It was the first occasion in my life when *I had a taste of the joy derived from suffering for a cause*—a joy, in comparison with which, the other joys of life pale and fade into insignificance. It was also the first occasion in my life when my theoretical morality and theoretical patriotism were put to a test and a very severe test—and when I came out of the ordeal unscathed, my future career had been chalked out once for all."

Now about the University Training Corps and its effect on Subhas's life. It was rather unusual for one from Janaki Nath's family to join an organisation in which arduous life was the most important factor, specially so when it is known that none among Subhas's brothers had taken part in hardy games. But Subhas was made of sterner stuff and subsequent events have sufficiently proved that in the innermost corner of his mind a hankering for a complete military training had been lurking in silence. The psychology which prompted some young students of the Presidency College to assault a teacher of their own, a preceptor or *guru* who in India is held in great respect and who occupies a place in order of reverence next to that of the parents, also prompted Subhas to join the University Training Corps. The following passage unfolds a part of the inner working of Subhas's mind:

> "Macaulay wrote a scathing denunciation of the Bengalis and called them a race of cowards....Government took the step of excluding the Bengalis from the army on the ground that they were not sufficiently warlike or brave."

It was in order to meet insults from the Britishers by 'physical force' as also to remove the stigma heaped on the Bengali character by Macaulay and to foil the policy of the Government of excluding the Bengalis from the Army that Subhas tried to acquire military training. Further he was imbued with the idea that in the moral and intellectual sphere, in the domain of philosophy and culture, and almost everywhere else, excepting physical strength, Indians were in no way inferior to the British people. Subhas must remove the disparity and if possible must prove superior to the average British tommy. In fact he was extremely proud (as he wrote on April 30, 1918) of the performance of the ordinary Bengali boys when in a shooting competition they proved superior to their *British* instructors.

Subhas would feel disgusted when affairs would run smoothly in the 'Camp'. He would call it 'monotonous' and would prefer a vigorous life. He liked the night at the Belghurria Camp, a few miles away from Calcutta, when the storm was high, there was torrential rain and the tents were flooded; and very early on the next morning the "target shooting" started. There was "continual firing" up to 4-30 p.m. and he felt happy that it was something in the shape of a 'field service' though in a miniature form. Hard work such as fixing the tent and constructing lavatories, carrying of water from distant places and above all the 'night operations' and 'acting the sentry' for the whole night made his life 'sweet'. (*'Jibantake madhumoy koria tulia chhila'*). The experience of this camp life was extremely 'pleasing' to him and he was of the opinion that there was no doubt that whatever little they could learn must have produced some good in each and every one of the party. Really, the 'effects' of only three months' training could not be of 'lasting benefit' to all, but the real gain is to be judged by the receptive qualities of head and heart of the trainees themselves. In fact he became enamoured of his 'camp life' and felt somewhat of a pang at the separation.

We cannot ignore the influence of the happenings that were taking place in the political sphere. Bengal was seething with discontent, acts of terrorism were rampant throughout Bengal, deeds of daring were being reported from different quarters, and Subhas, though as yet he had no res-

ponsibility in the matter took note of events shaped his conduct accordingly.

After his career in the University Training Corps, we clearly find the distant shadow of the nation's beloved 'NETAJI' of the future.

The next phase of the life of Netaji appears in the shape of the General Officer Commanding of the Volunteer Corps organised in connection with the Forty-third Session of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta with Pandit Motilal Nehru as the President. The idea of a volunteer organisation was not new in Bengal at the time. In social service, particularly during Hindu festivals when millions would congregate at the riverside or during disastrous visitations of nature, such as tornado or floods when thousands would be affected, volunteers could be recruited in plenty to render succour to the poor. In fact, for specific purposes young men were organised, and were disbanded when the occasion had been over. The two major political revolutionary parties of the day, *viz.*, 'The Jugantar' and the 'Anusilan Samity', had each their small volunteer organisations but they by sheer smallness of number could not reach Subhas's expectation.

He wanted it to be based on strictly military principles; in fact, he wanted to give it a new orientation. With that object in view he organised a volunteer corps primarily for getting their service in connection with the open session of the Congress and the huge exhibition that was to be organised and secondarily to give a fitting reception to the august President of the Congress. But under the surface the idea of having a permanent body of volunteers with full military training pervaded his mind. There was tremendous opposition from various quarters over the expenses to be incurred over 'nothing'. as they would say. Undeterred and with the help of his friends of the Jugantar Party he succeeded in organising a big corps in no time. The corps represented a British military unit in miniature, wore military uniform, bore military nomenclature and received military orders as in an army. What the G.O.C. wanted his volunteers to be was manifest in his uniform and the appearance he bore at that time. He immaculately dressed himself to the minutest detail in the costume of a general and as such 'he looked every inch a general.'

Some fools like myself who have lived to rue their indiscreet remarks, said that it was a pantomime. He was called by his political enemies 'a clown' and the whole show was dubbed a 'farce'; and the wiseacres in their wisdom thought the expenditure on the organisation, 'a huge waste'.

Some men with foresight took it otherwise and exclaimed: "It was a promise of the future " *The Welfare*, a journal of Calcutta, gave its impress-

sion on the Presidential procession in the following beautiful and prophetic language:

"....Before the daybreak the footpaths along the route were lined with a patient crowd, every inch of the terraces, verandahs, balconies and windows were taken up by eager faces,...straining eyes were keenly waiting the hour and beautiful heads had for once lifted the purdah to welcome the President of the Forty-third Session of the Indian National Congress. Maybe, but certainly they were gathered to welcome *a greater thing of higher important and nobler national significance—the birth among a non-martial race of a keen desire for martial honours. Indeed, a new day was dawning for Bengal, a new tradition was sought to be created;* —and the wave of hope and enthusiasm swept back the purdah just as in olden days it would sweep back the cold cruel veil when the conquering heroes marched back in triumph at the head of a victorious forces, and balconies and casements opened wide to rain down love and admiration, to shower flowers and goodwishes. So they rained, so they showered, so they beamed forth joy and hope on the proud head of the General Officer Commanding as he stood valiant in his commanding pose on the motor car, the conquering hero of the morning who had *conquered a people's apathy and timidity to the sound of drums and trumpets.* No, not an eye could ignore him, not a camera could miss him. He stood masterly as a Commander as the car crawled on, his sweeping hand only directing at times like a general signalling an army to action.....*He looked every inch a General—the air of self-consciousness, the silent look of self-assurance, and the apparent self-satisfaction of a hero were there unmistakably stamped on his face and figure....IT WAS A SIGHT—NO ! IT WAS A VISION ! A PROMISE OF THE FUTURE.*

Even then he was the 'Netaji'!

His Stay in England

Even while a student himself Subhas entertained the idea of someday visiting foreign countries with the primary object of securing a degree in Education to qualify himself fully for the teaching profession. This was a profession which was much to his liking, as, like Vivekananda, he thought he was to become a 'maker of men'. The words of Swamiji "Man-making is my mission" appealed to him. Wrote he about Swamiji: "He laid the greatest stress on character-building"; and from his student days at Cuttack, without knowing much of Swamiji, he strenuously worked among his fellow-students for 'character-building'. His high respect for his teachers,

and the ideal of Devendra Nath, his uncle and sometime Principal of the Krishnagore College, the adored of his pupils, and the opportunity that the teaching profession afforded for direct contact with the boys during the formative period of their life, all combined to attract him towards the profession.

The guardians of Subhas would not allow him to proceed to England for qualifying himself as a mere teacher. They could allow him to follow his course provided he did agree to appear at the next I.C.S. examination and if he were unsuccessful in his attempt, he might take admission in Cambridge or London for studies. In case he declined to accept the condition, there was a chance of the whole idea of his going to the United Kingdom being dropped altogether. But Subhas was imbued with a 'mission' in life as he wrote on August 31, 1915, and for the fulfilment of this he must study—"study the world around—both India and abroad and for this foreign travels are necessary." He acceded to the proposal of his father and started for England on September 11, 1919. He was apprehensive, in case he was successful in the Civil Service examination of being taken away from the path of his choice, his mission of man-making through education.

Subhas was not accustomed to take things lightly and leave his objective to its fate. From the time of fixing the mind on going to England for the I.C.S. examination, though against his will, he took matters seriously and prepared himself for a stay in England absolutely like an Englishman. He would jocularly say on the eve of his departure for England that he had been taking lessons from his brothers who had gone to England before him in handling the table knife and the fork and behaving just like an Englishman at the table. He must be punctilious in this respect as he disliked the idea of being slighted by his English fellow students even on the score of etiquette. So he behaved in every detail of life while in England. Nay, he would not allow any of his Indian friends in England to live in a manner which might represent him before Englishmen as one inferior to the latter in any respect.

He was a student, a man imbued with the object of learning and equipping himself for a career in this wide world. His mind could not be circumscribed within the pages of his books or the walls of his classroom. He must learn everything that was beneficial to him. His discerning eye discovered from the very first day of his arrival in England the many qualities of an average Englishman, and he tried to apply them to his life. Not that he was devoid of these qualities himself, but he thought

that these were some of the factors which make an ordinary Englishman look like a superior being in comparison to people of other nations.

Subhas was impressed with their method of work. According to him, an average Englishman has a complete picture of the whole task undertaken by him, and their vision is fixed always on the bright side of events. Their robust optimism carries them a long way towards a successful termination of their job and to all these qualities they bring punctuality and a habit of working with clock-like regularity to bear on their business. It is no wonder that they have been able to make a great headway in the affairs of the world. He attributed the climate of the United Kingdom to be favourable towards impelling one to activity. They were extremely conscious of their national interest and shaped their actions to foster that interest.

Subhas must prove superior to his English friends. He was obsessed with the idea of coming from a nation that had a glorious past and destined to play a still more glorious part in future. Those who saw him in England would testify that he was very soon able to impress his personality on all around him and became forthwith recognised as a leader not only among the Bengalee boys living in England at that time but the English boys also began to treat him with respect.

When he reached England there were only a little more than eight months to appear at the Indian Civil Service examination. Not only himself but also his relations, barring the harbouring of a faint hope, did not think it was possible for him to come out successful in the open competition. When the result was out he was found to have occupied the fourth place in the list of successful candidates with the first position in English composition. This was just a result of applying to studies at the beginning with a divided mind and that too with an apprehension of success. How he was placed between the two horns of a dilemma; he was at once faced with the problem of an impossible job of serving "both masters at the same time, namely, the British Government and my country."

He secured his Degree in Moral Science Tripos of the Cambridge University in 1921. He was very keen on passing this examination because he thought he would be able to use it as the foundation-stone of his future career.

In England Subhas interested himself in the activities of the Indian students and was impressed with the tone of 'extremism' in politics. He noted with satisfaction this tone of extremism more in women than in men,

and he at once concluded that as the women of India had begun taking such great interest in politics, the country, though enslaved, was bound to secure her freedom in the course of few years.

Subhas was now harassed by doubts. He wrote frantic letters to friends imploring them not to misjudge him on his success. He had decided on a career which might affect the normal way of earning his livelihood. He was greatly perturbed to intimate his decision to his relations who with great hopes had induced him to sit for the I.C.S. examination. At such a stage he looked up to his friend, philosopher and guide, his 'Mejdada', Shri Sarat Chandra Bose, for advice. Subhas was assured of all help in his career, a life of pecuniary dependence while remaining out of jail, and he at once communicated his decision to his father and simultaneously to the India Office.

The India Office was not prepared for such a contingency. It was a completely new affair in the history of the India Office. It was a serious blow to the prestige of the institution, and the glamour that surrounded the position might be seriously affected. It was a bad example to be set before the future generation of young Indians who might have been aspiring at the time for the 'heaven-born' Service. The India Office became a little nervous over the incident. Besides the usual official request, personal influence was brought to bear on Subhas. Mr. F. W. Duke who was then attached to the Secretary of State's Council as Adviser was one-time Commissioner of the Cuttack Division and had an opportunity of cultivating the personal friendship of Janaki Nath. He sent for Satish Chandra, the eldest brother of Subhas and who happened to be in the United Kingdom at the time, and after narrating his personal interest in their family requested Satish Chandra to induce Subhas to withdraw his letter of resignation. Not content with merely entrusting him with the job, Mr. Duke personally went from London to Cambridge to meet Subhas and to exert his own influence over him. Mr. Duke was even then in correspondence with Janaki Nath and it was not easy for young Subhas to withstand the request of a friend of his father inspired as it was by the interest of Subhas's family. But Mr. Duke's attempt failed as the world knows it today. After settling his affairs in London Subhas "hurried back to India with a view to taking my place in the national struggle that was then in full swing." He reached Bombay on July 16, 1921, and plunged headlong into the fray. He was now out to fulfill his 'Life's Mission' which he was able to comprehend as early as 1915, just in the 3rd year class of his college career.

His "Life's Mission"

While still in his teens Subhas had a clear grasp of his future course of action. It was rather precocious; nevertheless it is a fact that he had chalked out for himself the plan of action in bold outlines, and he was determined to carry it through. His life had flowed in one stream like the Ganges emerging out as a slender stream, expanding itself, enormously enriched by various currents in its journey, in size and length, distributing more and more bounty to the people living on its banks, fertilising the lands, carrying away the waste, bearing larger number of boats of growing commerce as it flows more and more towards the sea. In Subhas's life there was no bold departure not even a great jerk from his past or preceding career as was in the life of his *guru* Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, Mahatmaji, the great Nehrus, Motilal and Jawaharlal and a host of other political leaders. He was more akin in this respect to Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

Wrote Subhas on August 31, 1915, that he had realised from day to day that he had a "definite mission", and that he lived for the fulfilment of the mission; "and I am not to drift in the current of popular opinion." He knew very clearly that it was the way of the world that people would speak well or ill, and that there would be different opinions on every action of an individual, "but my sublime self-consciousness consists in this that I am not affected by them." If the world reacts in a manner to his actions which might bring him sorrow or frustration then he would interpret it as due to his own weakness and nothing else. But he who has fixed his eyes skyward, he who has desired to achieve great things, he would lose the knowledge and consciousness of approaching hills or wells, and in the like manner he who had a "mission in his life", to march towards an ideal, he had had to ignore the passing breath of criticism, for or against, his action. In his own words: "I must move about with the proud self-consciousness of one imbued with an idea."

Subhas said that to attain a complete stature of manhood he must satisfy at least three conditions, *viz.*, he must be

"(1) Embodiment of the past.
(2) Product of the present.
(3) Prophet of the future.
Therefore, he said,

(1) I must assimilate all the past history in fact all the past civilization of the world.

(2) I must study myself—study the world around me—both India and abroad, and for this foreign travels are necessary.

(3) I must be the prophet of the future—I must discover the laws of progress—the tendency of both the civilizations, to settle the future goal and progress of mankind. The philosophy of life will also help me in this."

Further he says, "This ideal must be realised through a nation—begin with India.

"Is not this a grand idea: But it is difficult to realise an idea. But what of that, we shall shake hands in the common march.

"The more we lift our eyes heavenwards the more we shall forget all that was bitter in the past. The future will dawn upon us in all its glory."

Most of the outstanding traits of his life come out in bold relief in his own words. He adjusted life in the model he had set before him before he was twenty and he rigidly followed this principle notwithstanding the fact that he created many enemies, scratched many a friend on the wrong side and pricked the bubble of vanity of many top-ranking leaders. For good or for evil, Subhas was never able to shake off his idea: "I am not to drift in the current of popular opinion"—even when he became faced with insuperable difficulties, and attacks from his political adversaries poured on him thick and fast. He put faith more on his "sublime self-consciousness" than on anything else, and from 1921 onwards till he fled the country in 1941 he was a problem, a terror to the order of things that wanted to flow smoothly in Congress circles.

Before closing this chapter, one particular instance of acting against the current opinion, should be cited. When both the Ashramas, Sabarmati and Pondicherry, were in the height of their popularity, when the ideas preached by the respective leaders, Mahatmaji and Sri Aurobinda, were being held in great esteem by the younger section of India, Subhas had had the boldness of attacking those schools of thought on December 25, 1928, in the following language:

"As I look around me today, I am struck by two movements or two schools of thought about which, however small and insignificant it may be, it is my duty to speak out openly and fearlessly. I am referring to the two schools of thought, which have their centres at Sabarmati and Pondicherry. I am not considering the fundamental philosophy underlying those two schools of thought. This is not the time for metaphysical speculation. I shall talk to you today as a pragmatist, as one who will judge the

intrinsic value of a school of thought not from a metaphysical point of view, but from experience of its actual effects and consequences.

"The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Sabarmati School of thought is to create a feeling and impression that modernism is bad, large-scale production is an evil, wants should not be increased, and the standard of living should not be raised, that we must endeavour to the best of our ability to go back to the days of the bullock-cart and that the soul is so important that physical culture and military training can well be ignored.

"The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Pondicherry School of thought is to create a feeling and an impression that there is nothing higher or nobler than peaceful contemplation, that *Yoga* means *Pranayama* and *Dhyana,* that while action may be tolerated as good, this particular brand of *Yoga* is something higher and better. This propaganda has led many a man to forget that spiritual progress under the present-day condition is possible only by ceaseless and unselfish action, that the best way to conquer nature is to fight her, and that it is weakness to seek refuge in contemplation when we are hemmed in all sides by dangers and difficulties.

"It is the passivism, not philosophic but actual, inculcated by these schools of thought against which I protest. In this holy land of ours, *Ashramas* are not new institutions and ascetics and *Yogis* are not novel phenomena. They have held and they will continue to hold an honoured place in society. But it is not their lead that we shall have to follow if we are to create a new India at once free, happy and great."

This outspoken utterance on the Pondicherry and Sabarmati schools of thought at once disturbed a veritable hornet's nest around him. Many of his erstwhile friends became dissatisfied with him, their warmth of friendliness grew lukewarm in them; some he definitely antagonised. His political adversaries made capital out of this utterance; a section of the Indian Press rabidly attacked him. And considering his opposition to Mahatmaji's resolution on Dominion Status *vs.* Independence issue in the open session of the Congress in the same year (1928), it is not difficult to think that perhaps it cost his popularity with Mahatmaji for ever.

"Dreams" and "Ideals"

With growing age and experience Subhas's outlook on life expanded. It comprised all the problems that faced India with the central idea of India's freedom. In political circles, he came to be known as a 'dreamer'

or 'visionary' for his extreme views and many of his opponents, failing to line their own activities up with Subhas's, called him a 'dreamer' and as one who had very little touch with reality. Subhas's was a bold heart and he would most gladly own up the charge against him and say:

"I plead guilty if I am accused of being a dreamer. I am a dreamer and I love my dreams. These dreams are to me as real as the work-a-day world is to the man in the street. From my dreams I derive inspiration and motive power. Without these dreams I can hardly live—for life then loses its meaning and its charm. The dream that I love is that of a free India—India resplendent in all her power and glory."

This he said on December 1, 1929; and on October 18 of the same year he begged of the realists and practical politicians, his friends and well-wishers,

"let us dream of an India for which it would be worth while to give all that we have, even life itself, and for which we could sacrifice our dearest and nearest."

To achieve his life's mission he must sacrifice his life; to give his ideas a shape, he must work ceaselessly and selflessly, and he may not remain in this world to enjoy the fruits of his labour and suffering. It was not in his grain to submit to injustice and illegality and he must carry on a relentless fight to achieve his objective.

While in the Insein Jail in Burma he wrote to his brother on May 6, 1927 that a strong conviction had taken entire possession of his mind that

"the struggles in this world are at bottom conflicts of ideas—conflict between false ideas and true—or as some would like to say, between different degrees of reality or different degrees of truth. Ideas are the stuff of which human movements are made and they are not static but dynamic and militant. They are as dynamic as the Absolute Idea of Hegel, the Blind Will of Hartmann and Schopenhauer, the 'elan vital' of Henri Bergson. Ideals will work out their own destiny, and we who are but clods of clay encasing sparks of Divine Fire have only got to consecrate ourselves to these ideas. A life so consecrated is bound to fulfil itself regardless of the vicissitudes of our material and bodily existence. My faith in the ultimate triumph of the idea for which I stand in unflinching, and I am not, therefore, troubled by thoughts about my health and future." He elaborated his view on 'ideas', 'ideals' and 'dreams' still further in his 'Political Testament' written on November 20, 1940 while in the prison in Calcutta. These are imperishable and invaluable gifts of God that have

raised mankind to its present stature, which have inspired the human beings to deeds of greater sacrifice: Writes Subhas :

"In the mortal world, everything perishes and will perish, but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea—but the idea will after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas, the dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next."

He continues in his own characteristic style and his views on the "cause" which he espoused, *viz.*, Freedom and Truth, are nowhere more explicit than in the following passage:

"As St. Paul said, 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.' Our cause is the cause of Freedom and Truth and as sure as day following night, that cause will ultimately prevail. Our bodies may fall and perish but with faith undiminished and will unconquerable, triumph will be ours. It is, however, for Providence to ordain who of us should live to witness the consummation of all our efforts and labours, and, for myself, I am content to live my life and leave the rest to destiny."

With Subhas his whole existence became synonymous with suffering and sacrifice. According to him, no sacrifice, no suffering goes without producing beneficial results and a struggle in the pursuit of an ideal is the very essence of life. "No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice" was his motto and he prepared himself and desired his comrades to prepare themselves for the supreme sacrifice. In his own words :

"Though there may be no immediate, tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering that in every age and clime the eternal law prevails that 'the blood of the martyr is the seed of the Church'."

And again :

"What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle ? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause ?"

Was there any greater and more forceful exponent of sacrificing one's

life for a cause ! Was there any greater and more inspiring advocacy for marching onward with one's ideals and principles irrespective of immediate or tangible gains!

This is not all. He is even more clear and his words are even more inspiring, and invigorating even to the heart of a struggler marching forward for achieving liberty. These are his words :

"Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth, earthy, he will gain much more in turn by being becoming the heir to a life immortal."

What is the value of life to him who has consecrated his all at the altar of freedom? He has found in this sacrifice and suffering the 'technique of the soul',—just a phrase worthy of Subhas. He speaks in 1940 as one inspired :

"This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. To-day I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory."

It can be said of Subhas that his was a principle, well grasped, his was a life, well lived and all earthly belongings, well sacrificed.

In the Vortex of High Politics

The decision of working the 1919 Reforms Act taken at Amritsar in December 1920, was revised in a Special Session of the Congress held in Calcutta under the presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai in September, 1920. In spite of opposition from Deshabandhu Das, Mrs. Beasant, Bipin Chandra Pal, Sir A. Choudhury and a host of front-rank politicians of India, boycott of the legislatures and local bodies, educational institutions, law-courts, government or official functions, boycott of foreign goods, renunciation of titles and government offices, rather a comprehensive 'non-co-operation' resolution, was adopted. This was confirmed in the plenary session of the Congress held in Nagpur in December, 1920. The constitution of the Congress was changed from "self-government within the British Empire" to "Swaraj or Self-rule" or according to Mahatmaji, "self-government within the Empire if possible—and outside, if necessary." There was a further change in the method of attaining Swaraj, which before the Nagpur Session was by "constitutional" means which was changed to "all peaceful and legitimate" means.

The reasons for this change of attitude on the part of the Indian people have been expressed by Mahatmaji in his inimitable way, and it represented at the time the mind of a great majority of the politically-

minded people of India. Mahatmaji in the sedition trial before Mr. Broomfield in 1922 said:

"The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwalla Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered, too, that the plighted words of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But in spite of the foreboding and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919, I fought for co-operation and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, hoping the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the Reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India. But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was whitewashed and most culprits were not only unpunished but remained in service and some continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue, and in some cases were even rewarded. I saw, too, that not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude."

The movement of 'non-violent non-co-operation' became almost a historical necessity because no other movement in any shape or form could make much headway. Writes Subhas :

"In 1920 India stood at the cross-roads. Constitutionalism was dead; armed revolution was sheer madness. But silent acquiescence was impossible. The country was groping for a new method and looking for a new leader. Then there sprang up India's man of destiny—Mahatma Gandhi—who had been biding his time all these years and quietly preparing himself for the great task ahead of him. He knew himself—he knew his country's needs and he knew also that during the next phase of India's struggle, the crown of leadership would be on his head. No false sense of modesty troubled him—he spoke with a firm voice and the people obeyed."

The Special Session of the Congress in Calcutta and the plenary session at Nagpur were triumphs for Mahatmaji's plan of action and it became necessary that he should conduct the movement in his own way. So far as the technique of non-violence was concerned Bengal had demonstrated during the days of 'Indigo riots' and again in the days of the Swadeshi

movement in 1905 that it can be adopted with an amount of success even by the common man. It is determination that counts. Now this technique was to be adopted by the nation, and no one was more gifted than Mahatma Gandhi for this great task. He "translated the teachings of Christ and the ideas of Tolstoy and Thoreau into actual practice and demonstrated that it was possible to fight for liberty without resorting to violence." Before 1920 'non-co-operation' was used in remedying local ills, but Mahatmaji now used it "for winning national freedom and he well-nigh demonstrated that it was possible to paralyse the civil administration of a foreign Government thereby bringing the Government to its knees." Mahatmaji was an experienced man in the line having had used 'Satyagraha' in South Africa and in India with considerable success. Mahatmaji with "thorough ascetic discipline had equipped himself for a life of suffering", and the Nagpur Congress put on him, not unjustifiably, the entire responsibility of conducting the affairs of the Congress. Relating to the chain of events during 1919, 1920 and the year that followed writes Subhas :

"Throughout the year 1919, lightning and thunder had raged in the political sky of India—but towards the end of the year the clouds lifted and the Amritsar Congress seemed to herald an era of peace and quiet. But the promise of Amritsar was not fulfilled. Once again the clouds began to gather and towards the end of 1920 the sky was dark and threatening. With the new year came whirlwind and storm. And the man who was destined to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm was Mahatma Gandhi."

Subhas before leaving England had thought out the possibility of success or failure of the non-co-operation movement and had further discussion in detail with one of the master minds of the world, Rabindra Nath Tagore, on the steamer on his way back to India. Subhas's mind was not quite clear about the different shapes the movement could assume and in his hurry to get a clear perspective of the whole matter he went almost straight to Mahatmaji in his European costume to get a clarification of the various issues from the progenitor of the movement himself. He was satisfied from the answer of Mahatmaji that the different activities so far "conducted by the Congress will successfully culminate in the last stage of the campaign, namely, the non-payment of taxes." He was doubtful whether 'non-payment of taxes or civil-disobedience could force the Government to retire from the field and leave us with our freedom', and how was it possible to attain Swaraj, with the doubtful methods just mentioned to attain "Swaraj within one year." The answers given by Mahatmaji did not satisfy Subhas and he came back 'depressed and disappointed' from

the long-cherished interview. One cannot definitely say whether he could ever overcome this 'disappointment' of Mahatmaji's programme and policy as adopted by the Congress in years following, but from the subsequent conduct of Subhas it is now clear that he held more radical views than most of the associates of Mahatmaji and in his attempt to bring the Congress round his views he was knocking with his head a solid wall of granite to force his way through to the 'Promised Land.'

When Subhas reached Calcutta the country was in great ferment. The 'triple boycott' of the law-courts, legislatures and educational institutions was in full swing and some of the most outstanding men from each province had joined Mahatmaji to give his plan a trial. Arbitration boards have been set up everywhere and for some time they worked as a parallel body to the law-courts and affected the revenue of the Government. The temperance movement, including boycott of all forms of stimulants, became very popular and kept the younger section of the workers busy in organising 'Satyagraha' before liquor and other shops selling intoxicants. Schools and colleges responded splendidly and they helped, in addition to carrying the various items of the programme, in raising funds and selling 'khadi' amongst the populace. From July (1921) intensive boycott of foreign goods in general and foreign cloth in particular was introduced, thereby seriously affecting imports of foreign textiles in India. *Pari passu* new cotton mills were started more so in Ahmedabad and Bombay to cope with the growing demand for indigenous cloths.

Other isolated events of more or less great import were the Assam-Bengal Railway strike, which, though it ultimately collapsed without achieving anything remarkable, proved in "the earlier stages that it made the people conscious of the power that they could wield if only they could combine against the authorities." The Midnapore No-tax Campaign, a movement against certain measures of the Local Self-Government Act was eminently successful in so much as it held the Government completely at bay for a long time until they were ultimately withdrawn.

On his arrival in Calcutta he forthwith saw Deshabandhu in his house and at once they came so close to each other that the rebellious and questioning spirit of young Subhas found an asylum where he could relegate everything reserving to himself the privilege of obeying unflinchingly whatever he was told to do. He was told by Deshabandhu that youth and inexperience were no bar to service to motherland. According to Subhas, Deshabandhu "had always been a friend of youth" and he "could understand their aspirations and sympathise with their sorrows," Subhas had

failed in finding a spiritual *guru* and now in his initiation to the love of politics he discovered his *guru* who "knew what he was about—who could give all that he had and who could demand from others all they could give—a man to whom youthfulness was not a short-coming but a virtue." At the end of the conversation Subhas's mind was made up and he felt "that I had found a leader" and he meant to follow him.

At Deshabandhu's order he became the Principal of the National College, the Gaudiya Sarbbabidyayatana, opened in May 1921 for instruction of the non-co-operating boys, he also became the captain of the Volunteer Corps of the Congress. He was brought into contact with the Members of the Working Committee in September at Desabandhu's house. Here also he met at the same time the prominent leaders of the various revolutionary parties in Bengal who had come to cross swords with Mahatmaji on the score of non-violence.

His mettle was tested in conducting the new National University and organising the boycott of the visit of the Prince of Wales with his volunteers, and as Publicity Officer of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

When the year was coming to a close he was in prison and his misgivings regarding 'Swaraj within one year' were coming to be true. The explanation that were offered by the blind followers of the Mahatma did not convince him and he argued within himself that the promise "was not only unwise but childish." Says he :

"It made the Congress appear so foolish before all reasonable men. No doubt the Mahatma's disciples have tried subsequently to explain away the point by saying that the country did not fulfil the conditions and so Swaraj could not be won within one year. The explanation is as unsatisfactory as the original promise was unwise—because arguing in the same way, any leader can say that if you fulfil certain conditions you can be free in one hour. In making political forecasts, no leader worth the name should impose impossible conditions. He should estimate what conditions are like to be fulfilled and what results are likely to be achieved in a given set of cirmumstances."

But there was another side of this long promise. It intensified the efforts of the believers and brought within its ambit others who would dislike long suffering and prolonged or sustained efforts. The keen eye and sharp intellect of Subhas did not fail to notice this aspect of the promise and he has expressed his opinion in the following words :

"The whole-hearted support of the Moslem community and the novelty of the method of non-co-operation brought more strength to the movement,

while the slogan of 'Swaraj within one year' drew into the field many people who would have been appalled by the prospect of a long period of suffering."

He has spoken of the splendid response of the Muslim community under the leadership of the Ali brothers, Mohammed and Shaukat, to the movement of non-violent non-co-operation on the issue of the Khilafat *i.e.* of "restoring to the 'Khalifa', the head of the Islamic Church, the temporal power which he had enjoyed as Sultan of Turkey before the Great War." During the continuance of the Great War, to placate the Indian Moslems, the British Government made a declaration on January 5, 1918, to the effect that the Turks would be allowed to retain possession of Asia Minor and Thrace and that the 'Khalifa' would not be deprived of the territories in Europe and Asia Minor which were predominantly Muslim in population and were deemed as holy places of Islam. In 1920 it was apparent that the British Government were not in a mood to keep their promise and the Indian Moslems became greatly agitated over this affair. The All-India Khilafat Committee was formed to enforce their will and Mahatma Gandhi did not fail to get hold of this organisation to strengthen his movement of non-co-operation, both directed against the common foe.

There was nothing wrong in it; in fact, if it had not been so, the various phases through which the movement passed, specially the boycott of the Prince of Wales's visit to India on November 17, 1921, could not have been so eminently successful. But there was a snag which ultimately turned one of the greatest virtues of the joint movement to a serious handicap. The real mistake was to allow "the Khilafat Committee to be set up as an independent organisation throughout the country, quite apart from the Indian National Congress." The result was disastrous. The 'Khilafat' was abolished by Gazi Mustapha Kemal Pasha in 1924 and there was no further necessity of maintaining the existence of the Khilafat Committees which had been encouraged to grow along with the Congress Committees throughout India. With no work as a political organisation the Khilafat organisation "were absorbed by sectarian, reactionary and pro-British Moslem organisations." In fact, Mahatmaji taught the Moslem community to organise a movement of such a large dimension, and it may be said that Khilafat Movement was the first initiation of the Moslems in political struggle on a mass scale.

At the close of the year, when the boycott of the Prince of Wales's visit to India had met with tremendous success, the Government of India through Lord Reading thought of placating the Congress so that the Prince's

visit may pass off peacefully without any hostile demonstration. Lord Reading himself was feeling 'puzzled and perplexed' and he thought of coming into touch with the incarcerated leaders with the help of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. When Deshabandhu agreed to open up negotiations with the Government, on condition that the political prisoners should be released, the Government was agreeable and the negotiation progressed a good deal. The Ali Brothers were convicted on a charge of sedition and the Government wanted to deal with their case separately. Mahatmaji was adamant and made the release of Ali Brothers a condition precedent to peace talks. Lord Reading, though he agreed to release those prisoners on a later date, rejected the proposal of Mahatmaji.

When the offer came through Pandit Malaviya, Subhas was against it. But Deshabandhu was able to bring him round to his views on the ground that if the jail-delivery could once take place before December 31, then "it would appear to the popular imagination as a great triumph of the Congress." There was no achievement worth the name against the promise of attainment of "Swaraj within the year" and the very news that the Government was anxious to come to terms with the Congress would act as a sop to the mass of the people. Mahatmaji remained unyielding and the negotiation broke down. We have been told that "the Deshabandhu was beside himself with anger and disgust. The chance of a lifetime, he said, had been lost." The events that were taking place in and outside India justified Deshabandhu's remarks. The authorities were greatly worried over the Prince's visit and about the same time the United Kingdom became involved in various ways and almost each movement went against her own interests. The violent conflict with the Irish Sinn Feiners resulted in a treaty signed on December 6, 1921 and gave a rude shock to the British prestige at home and abroad. Afghanistan entered into a treaty with Russia, a power which the British held in awe for a century over the score of an invasion of India. The 'Russian Bear' caused millions of Indian money to be wasted over nothing and the apprehended threat never took shape. Britain now was confronted with an alliance between two powers whom she had never looked upon with favour and which alliance brought the attacking point, if it had ever existed, nearer to India. Persia and Russia also entered into an alliance much to the uneasiness of Great Britain. The Wafadists in Egypt were gaining in strength from day to day and they were not at all favourably disposed towards Britain. Their activities were causing extreme anxiety in the diplomatic circle of England. There was the trouble over Khilafat which the unscrupulous British politicians were able to ward off for the

moment with dubious promises. In fact the whole Moslem world had been gradually drifting towards a front calculated to embarrass the dovecotes of the British Imperialists.

According to Subhas, Deshabandhu was of the opinion that "the Mahatma opens a campaign in a brilliant fashion; he works it up with unerring skill; he moves from success to success till he reaches the zenith of his campaign—but after that he loses his nerve and begins to falter."

In spite of his resentment at the failure of the peace talks Deshabandhu agreed to preside over the Ahmedabad Congress held at the end of the year. In his written speech which was read by Hakim Ajmal Khan, he supported the method of the Congress in pushing the non-co-operation movement to its logical conclusion of bringing about a deadlock in the administration of the country. The main resolution called upon the people to adopt a policy of individual and mass civil disobedience, to join the National Volunteer Corps, to defy the emergency ordinances and court imprisonment.

His Part in the Movement

Subhas joined the non-co-operation movement even when he was in England. There had been a large number of cases of suspension of legal practice, renunciation of titles, a large measure of success in boycotting schools and colleges, but there have been very few cases of giving up government services and still less in high places. His interviews with Mahatmaji at Mani Bhaban in Bombay and Deshabandhu in Calcutta made him a confirmed non-co-operator, and he threw himself heart and soul into the movement. He was an extremely sensitive young man and he was seriously perturbed over the expenses which he should incur over himself. He could not take it from the Congress organisation nor from any body else over whom he had any moral claim. If it was possible for Subhas to bestow his whole time and energy untramelled to the movement it was due to his 'Mejda' Shri Sarat Chandra Bose. It is not a fact that there were no dissuading voices around him in Calcutta but it was his brother who stood by him and encouraged him in his activities. Subhas was assured of all support help, financial and moral, and up to the very last days of his stay in Calcutta this support was forthcoming. Almost on every occasion he would consult Sarat Chandra and be guided by him. At the Calcutta Bar Sarat Chandra had then established himself in his position and was a favourite of Mr. C. R. Das. Subhas thus came simultaneously under the influence of two of the best talents of Bengal of the time and had had the advantage of getting their guidance whenever necessary.

It was as the Principal of the National University that Subhas first applied himself to Congress activities of Bengal and of India. He was to be found from the early morning till late at night squatting on the floor with heaps of files and clusters of men seeking his advice. His academic qualifications, his training in Europe as a student of the I.C.S. Examination, his untiring energy, spotless moral character, his physical features and his dress of spotless white Khaddar made him an attractive personality eminently suited for the post. Subhas, brought up in the influence of Vivekananda, now looked up to the ideal of Aurobinda Ghosh and exerted his utmost in making the Gaudiya Sarbavidyatayana worth the name. He had to attend to every detail, this being a characteristic of him which was sometimes overdone, and he found pleasure in talking to young men, some of whom had been very promising in their academic career but had left their studies at the call of the nation and had voluntarily courted a life of uncertainty of suffering and not unoften of a painful death. His own idealism was heightened by stories of immense sacrifice from young men who had been the mainstay of their respective families and on whom rested the future hopes of indigent parents and relatives. He would feel proud of this spirit of sacrifice among men and would often speak of glory that awaited Bengal through the services of her youthful sons of immature age.

His contact with the students became all the more close due to the fact that he had to select subjects and lines of study for these young men and as a result his contact with them became extremely cordial and intimate. He was amazed at the fortitude of young men who had struggled with poverty and were on the point of establishing themselves in their life's career and had thrown their lot in the struggle for freedom. His tender heart began to beat in unison with the difficulties of the poorer classes of the students and he would draw upon the resources of his brother to meet the barest necessities of those who needed any help.

Subhas became extremely fond of these young men; and the sentiment was reciprocal. He firmly entrenched himself in the hearts of the young workers of the Province. He idolised youth and in his turn became an idol of the students and the youth. In the subsequent phases of his life's career, he desired to depend more on the enthusiasm and inexperience of youth for acts of heroism and sacrifice than on the cautious advice emanating from age seasoned by experience.

Subhas's performance as the Publicity Officer of the Congress at once attracted notice of the friends and foes of the Congress alike. His method

of work was superb. His sphinx eye would watch any attempt on the part of the Government at outmanoeuvring Congress leaders by propaganda. The next day would come a smashing reply from the Congress. He could at once discern where weakness lay in Government bulletins and press notes and by clever analysis would make them unworthy of credence by the public. Even the European-managed newspapers in Calcutta could not conceal their embarrassment over the matter and one of them declared that while the Government had lost one of the best servants by the resignation of Subhas Bose the Congress has correspondingly been strengthened by his wholeheartedly joining it and making its cause his own. His language in Congress propaganda literature was always clear and his appeals went straight to the heart and produced tremendous effect on the public. It was not difficult to understand what he meant to say because he never suffered from confusion of ideas and dearth of proper or expressive words.

As the Captain of the Congress Volunteer Organisation he at once became an object of admiration. His close touch with the young men of Bengal as the Principal of the National University was an asset to him and it gave him an opportunity for selecting the right men for keeping up the movement. His power of organisation proved of inestimable value in connection with the boycott of the Prince of Wales's visit in November, 1921. This enraged the Government and also the Anglo-Indian Press in Calcutta and they became frantic with rage. At their insistence the Volunteer Organisation of Bengal was declared illegal and it gave an easy opportunity to the Congressmen to openly flout the authority of the Government throughout the Province. Subhas redoubled his activity to keep the movement going and he and his friends spared no pains to recruit volunteers to be sent out to transgress the law. His duties as the Principal of the National University could no longer be "continued and more so, because the students and some members of the staff were anxious to join the campaign."

The result of the appeal of the leaders of Bengal was somewhat discouraging. In indignation Deshabandhu thundered forth and his words rang through the air from end to end of Bengal :

"I am growing old and infirm and the battle has just commenced. They have not taken me yet, but I feel the handcuffs on my wrist and the weight of iron chains on my body. It is the agony of bondage. The whole of India is a vast prison. What matters if I am taken or left. One thing is certain. The work of the Congress must be carried on whether I am dead or alive."

The response was immediate. But to add further momentum to the

pace of recruitment he sent Basanti Devi, his wife and Chira Ranjan, his only son and his sister, Urmila Devi, to break the law and be arrested. Arrested they were and the news of their arrest sent a thrill throughout the length and breadth of the country shaking the faith of even confirmed loyalists in Bengal. In exasperation the Government arrested on December 10, 1921, the leaders of the movement, the Deshabandhu, Deshpran Sasmal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Subhas and a host of others. Subhas thus had his first baptismal in suffering with his political *guru* and was luckily put in the same gaol during the period of six months of imprisonment, a sentence passed on February 14, 1922, convicting them for being members or organisers of an unlawful organisation.

Here Subhas was able to gather a more intimate knowledge of that great man and instead of his 'familiarity breeding contempt', he used to say that such close association enhanced his respect and reverence for Deshabandhu thousandfold. He served Deshabandhu as his cook and caretaker; his tender heart would find out the wants, unexpressed, of his *guru* and he would try to remove them as much as possible. Deshabandhu would discuss with him philosophy and would take lessons from him and to a certain extent it was a problem to fellow prisoners to ascertain who of the two was more dependent on the other.

A few weeks after his release from prison Subhas was found grappling with formidable situation in North Bengal caused by a serious flood, rather unusual for the time. So far as political activities were concerned, there was a comparative slump in the country and Subhas was thinking of his next programme of work when he was entrusted by Sir P. C. Roy with the task of bringing relief to the afflicted in North Bengal. He at once proceeded to Santahar and took charge of the relief operations there. He knew no rest. His energy never flagged and he would first place himself in perilous position before he would ask anybody to take that place. His example served as an inspiration to his co-workers, most of whom were very young and inexperienced and had not had the physical and mental equipment to undergo the amount of suffering that was demanded of them in that onerous task. Subhas has had a training in his youthful days in serving the poor and the afflicted even at a great personal inconvenience or discomfort. In the face of the great ordeal, he was the best man that could be selected for the work. Here he displayed a remarkable power of organisation against odds and his fellow workers seemed to be fired with his enthusiasm. Perched on a country boat he would move from place to place and share the insufficient morsel that could be had at the moment with his friends

without a murmur. He would go into every detail of work and would appear at odd hours to know for himself whether the work entrusted to someone had not been duly executed.

Strangely enough he maintained a splendid health during the whole period that he was there. Nobody would hear a complaint from him regarding his health though the excessive strain of work made him lose a good deal of weight. But one thing he could not escape. The tender skin which was never accustomed to continued moisture from dirty water was damaged and he developed bad and troublesome sores on his legs quite up to the knee. It took a long time to heal and left scars which he bore all through his life.

His services in this connection endeared him more to the people of Bengal and extracted unstinted praise from every quarter not excluding the Governor of the Province. Though Sir P. C. Roy was not a Congressman in the strict sense of the term he placed the entire responsibility of conducting the relief operations at the hands of Congressmen, and they in their turn, by selfless service, only added to the prestige of the Congress.

As a 'Swarajist'

The next few years up to his arrest on October 25, 1924, Subhas worked under Deshabandhu and helped him in all possible ways. While in jail, Deshabandhu thought of changing the tactics of the Non-co-operation Movement and instead of boycotting the Legislatures he wanted to carry the fight on the floor of the House. His aim was to select candidates for the Assembly who would ceaselessly fight against obnoxious measures and try to wreck the constitution by making the Legislatures impossible to function. Most of the advanced political workers of Bengal enthusiastically supported Deshabandhu's plan of action and on release from jail he thought of bringing the Congress round to his view. In an atmosphere enveloped in gloom of despair and inaction there was the streak of light towards which all eyes were directed and Subhas threw himself heart and soul into the movement to make it a success.

At the next Congress at Gaya Deshabandhu, as President, gave expression to his views and pleaded for the acceptance of his programme. There was great opposition from the 'orthodox' followers of Mahatmaji, though he was not bodily present, and they yielded to the extent that the "Congress should contest the elections but should not participate in the work inside the Legislatures." On this issue Deshabandhu resigned his Presidentship of the Congress.

Now, the Congress was divided and the two parties came to be known as "Pro-changers" and the "No-changers", and the former subsequently became known as the Swarajya Party of India. The tactics followed at the time "consisted in summoning frequent meetings of Congress organisations throughout the country and asking for a reversal of the resolutions passed at the Gaya Congress." This was allowed by the Congress in 1922, but after the Tripuri Congress in 1939, Subhas Chandra Bose was expelled from its primary membership for his attempt to bring the Congress round to his views on certain matters with which he disagreed.

All along the campaign carried on by Deshabandhu, Subhas was at his elbow and added strength to his efforts. But he was more helpful to Deshabandhu in other ways. His association with the young men of Bengal actuated him to organise these youthful enthusiasts into an organisation and draw upon their support at times of need. The All-Bengal Youth League or 'The Young Bengal Party' was formed with Subhas as President. The programme was rather ambitious for young men and comprised complete Independence of India, community of interest with Labour and the peasants, amelioration of the economic condition of the masses, reduction of working hours, a minimum scale of wages, medical leave with full pay, old age pension, compensation for infirmity or serious accidents, etc., etc. This identification of interests of the working class with the aims of the Party was perhaps due to Deshabandhu's taking keener interest in the Indian Trade Union Movement of this time as he signified his open support to the movement by presiding over the first meeting of the All-India Trade Union Congress at Lahore. He also accepted the Presidentship of the Labour Association of the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur.

The Young Men's Conference held in Calcutta in December "was the precursor of the Youth Movement in the Province. This Conference revealed the desire on the part of youth to have a movement and an organisation of their own, quite apart from the Indian National Congress."

There was at first difficulty in the way of inducing Congressmen to accept a view which went against the declared policy of Mahatmaji, and Subhas writes :

> "When we took stock of our following, we found that we were in a minority. It was difficult for us at first to raise funds, because we had rebelled against the official programme of the Congress. Nevertheless, we were a disciplined and determined band of workers and with unbounded enthusiasm, we addressed ourselves to our task."

In connection with the formation of the Swarajya Party, Subhas had other duties to perform. There was *Banglar Katha*, a Bengali daily, started in 1922, which supplemented the Swarajist propaganda, and in Subhas's own words: "I had to become editor overnight under the orders of the leader."

As a result of intensive propaganda throughout India the Swarajist gained substantial ground, so much so that the Delhi Congress, held in September, 1923, accepted a compromise formula on the strength of which "the Congressmen were permitted to take part in the forthcoming elections and carry on a uniform, continuous and consistent opposition against the Government within the Legislatures, but the Congress as an organisation would have no responsibility in the matter."

Elated with victory Deshabandhu came back with his followers and started an English daily newspaper, *Forward*, in October, 1923. The preliminary stages of bringing out the paper had not proceeded very far when some of the organisers were thrown into prison without trial, and Subhas was entrusted with the task of its management. He worked day and night without rest and would sometimes write editorial articles for the paper. As in other fields of his activity here also in editing of one and in managing the affairs of another newly-started daily, suffering from want of funds and other resources except enthusiasm, Subhas made his mark. With regard to *Forward* and its career, Subhas writes :

> "Though the launching of the paper entailed very hard work on our part, success followed rapidly and in its career, the paper was able to keep pace with the growing popularity and strength of the Party. Within a short time *Forward* came to hold a leading position among the Nationalist journals in the country. Its articles were forceful, its news service varied and up-to-date and the paper developed a special skill in the art of discovering and exposing official secrets."

The General Election to the Legislatures under the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution introducing dyarchy was very near, and the leader of the Swarajya Party, Shri Chittaranjan Das, with his followers all over India girded up their loins to put up a stiff fight to those who had found it easy to enter the Legislatures due to the Council-boycott programme of the Congress in 1920. The 'No-changers' had been watching with scepticism the progress of the Swarajists in their career and nothing but ridicule awaited the new Party on its failure. The driving force of Deshabandhu

and the dynamic power of execution of his lieutenants in Bengal was demonstrated by thumping victory of the Swarajists everywhere. In the Swarajist fight against the supporters of Dyarchy, and no less of those who had some influence in the country as political and social workers, Subhas proved to be the ablest lieutenant of Deshabandhu. He brought his knowledge, his forensic ability, untiring energy, strong personality, a halo of sacrifice and suffering, power of organisation to bear on the movement and the efforts of the Swarajya Party were crowned with success They were able to give a stiff fight in the Provincial and Central Legislative Assemblies and were able to bring about constitutional deadlock in some Provincial Governments.

Subhas, due to omission of his name in the electoral roll, could not stand for election to the Bengal Legislature and was thus able as one free from the burden of membership of the Assembly to feed the current of rising tempo against the 'popular' Ministers and the Constitution that contained a make-believe scheme of 'transferred subjects.'

At this period Subhas imbibed many of the qualities of Deshabandhu as a great leader of an aggressive political party. Deshabandhu would not spare himself to meet anybody who could be of any help to him in his great task. He would not mind the social or economic status of those people and would treat them as his equals, throwing away all sense of pride or prejudice, if any. He would implore of them to come to help the Party and through the Party the country at large. Subhas was able to throw off part of his former reserve and aloofness and to mix with all and sundry and whole-heartedly work in any sphere.

But a position of greater responsibility awaited him. When in 1924 Deshabandhu Das thought of capturing the Calcutta Corporation as a part of his Swarajist programme and succeeded completely in his efforts, he made Subhas its Chief Executive Officer, a coveted post which Lord Curzon once humorously wanted to exchange with his own. He was appointed on April 24, 1924, and the Government after great hesitancy approved it after a month. He was arrested on October 25, 1924, under the Bengal Cr. Law-Amendment Ordinance. During the short time he was in office, he was able to impress the administration with his great personality and the thoroughness of a finished administrator. In a few weeks 'fairy tales' of his achievement became current in the city and such was his popularity at that time that it would be simply believed by a large number of people and it was often difficult to bring the story down to the level of factual events. He was everywhere either in person or through his notes and

orders and his chief aim was to give effect to the programme which Deshabandhu Das had outlined in his speech as the first Mayor of Calcutta. While providing for relief to the poor, its object was to try for better health, better sanitation and better conditions of living of the common citizens. Subhas always kept before his mind the words of Deshabandhu that "the civic bodies should be made into a real poor man's Corporation." Subhas once said that to translate Deshabandhu's ideal into practice "what is needed is the passion, the zeal and the desire to serve the poor. That will be the motive power, which can convert the Corporation into really a poor man's Corporation." While in office he never deflected from this ideal, and his very first act towards implementation of his views was to reduce his salary of Rs. 3,000|- per month to half of it only, and out of this he would meet the expenses of indigent students and other friends in difficulty. When he was arrested, he left this legacy of a monthly commitment of over one thousand rupees to his Mejda, Shri Sarat Chandra Bose, who bore it ungrudgingly for many years in addition to his own with accretion as years rolled on.

Undaunted by the arrests of his most trusted lieutenants in Bengal Deshabandhu marched forward with his Swarajist programme and was able in time to disarm the opposition of Mahatmaji; and in the early part of 1925 a compromise known as "the Gandhi-Das Pact" was effected. The Swarajists were placed in charge of the political programme. This Pact was ratified at the Belgaum (Bombay) Congress held in 1924 and over which Mahatmaji himself presided. At the Cawnpore Session held in 1925 and presided over by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu the decision that "the Congress should take up the task of running the elections instead of leaving it to the Swaraj Party" was adopted, and the programme of Deshabandhu was thoroughly vindicated.

In the next election to the Bengal Council, held in the latter part of 1926 as a result of a 'no-confidence' motion on the Ministry, Subhas was set up as a candidate in the North-Calcutta constituency against a formidable Liberal candidate, Mr. J. N. Basu, an attorney-at-law, nephew of Bhupendra Nath Basu, an ex-President of the Congress. Such was his great influence in the constituency that at the election just preceding the one under reference, he had defeated the Swarajist candidate. About him it has been said that "he was exceedingly popular in his constituency and was a fine type of gentleman and he had nothing against him except his Liberal Politics."

Subhas was not a resident of the locality and in addition to that his

election suffered from his absence due to his detention in the Burma prisons at that time. Deshabandhu Das was no more in the land of living to guide the elections. But such as Subhas's popularity at the time that he was returned with a majority to the Bengal Legislature.

In May, 1927, he was released from prison and at once set out with his colleagues in the legislature to enforce the Swarajist programme and succeeded in August to carry a vote of no-confidence in the Bengal Legislative Council, and Ministers were thrown out again.

In conducting the affairs of the Swarajist Party in Bengal, he displayed admirable skill and resourcefulness. He had imbued the spirit of resistance to the Constitution from his leader, Deshabandhu Das, and proceeded with the fervour of a religious fanatic for its overthrow. He knew that even though the Ministers had to resign through the onslaughts of the Opposition in the Legislature, the policy had lost much of its novelty and, may be, a part of its usefulness. But it helped him to keep up continuous opposition against the Government, and thereby to strengthen the agitation outside the Legislatures. He upheld the honour of the legacy that Deshabandhu had left behind.

In the Prisons of Burma

On his arrest on October 25, 1924, Subhas was removed to the Alipore Central Jail in Calcutta whence he was taken to the Berhampore Jail. He was brought back to Calcutta at midnight of January 25, 1925, and on the very next day he was on his way to Mandalay, Burma, with eight other prisoners who were the closest associates of Deshabandhu since the Non-co-operation days. He was in Burma for more than two years, when he was transferred to Bengal in the early part of May, 1927. He was ultimately released from custody on the 16th of the same month.

His stay in the Mandalay and Insein Jails of Burma brought him some rest from his intense public activities outside. But his mind, vigorous to the extreme, began to work uninterrupted from outside influences in its own channel and this period of two years, marred by serious illness at the close, was a period of rigid introspection and preparation for the future struggle of the country. He read voraciously books on history, Bengalee literature, psychology, especially on criminals, prison reform, religion, *Tantra* and a host of other subjects, allowed by the censor as a suitable for the consumption of the prisoners. He and his friends, "eight of the most dangerous men in India" derived consolation from the idea that this jail had also housed Tilak Maharaj, Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh

at some time or other, that they had been following in the footsteps of great men who by their suffering and sacrifice had advanced the cause of Indian independence.

Some of the letters that Subhas wrote to his friends and relations disclose the working of his mind at the time and are the best specimens of epistolary literature. The seclusion of jail life helped him to weigh in the balance the great problems of life that had confronted him and he derived great pleasure from the thought that some of these problems had been proceeding well-nigh towards solution. The longer the detention period extended without the least chance of knowing the limit, the greater was his realisation of peace of mind free from anxiety. His belief in the words of Emerson that "We must live wholly from within" became more confirmed and brought him great mental peace and happiness. He was led to think that imprisonment had afforded him a great opportunity to make a supreme effort for the blossoming of the inner self and he was highly satisfied with the progress he could make in that surrounding. He refused to measure his own achievement in the standard of those who had been working outside the jails because he had at the moment been training himself for supreme sacrifice for the country. According to him, one must sacrifice everything before the realisation of one's ideals. Said he that (त्याग च अमृत) "renunciation and realisation" are the two sides of the same shield. In suffering there is eternal joy; and nobody should grudge lesser pain to reach a richer and a wider realm of delight. Tears are not always the manifestation of pain, troubles and tribulations, but may also be the outcome of mercy and love. He did never feel depressed or pessimistic about the future but was confident in the belief that suffering and pain would serve as incentives to greater deeds and nobler achievements. He never felt sure that results achieved without suffering and sacrifice had anything of abiding value.

There were troubles with the Jail authorities from time to time, and their habitation was none too comfortable. In his own language :

> "...the Jail buildings were built not of stone nor of brick, but of wooden palisading. The buildings looked exactly like cages in a zoo or in a circus. From the outside and especially at night, the inmates of these buildings appeared almost like animals prowling about behind the bars. Within these structures we were at the mercy of the elements. There was nothing to protect us from the biting cold of winter or the intense heat of summer or the tropical rains in

Mandalay. We all began to wonder how we were going to live our life there. But there was no help and we had to make the best of a bad situation."

His religious mind, so long submerged under the pressure of political events, found expression in his Jail life and completely regained its poise. Partly to break the monotony of the situation and partly to satisfy the inner craving for worshipping the image or symbol of 'strength' which lay dormant in his mind, he and his associates thought out a plan for bringing an image of the Goddess Durga in the jail compound and worshipping her in the orthodox Hindu style. They had to cross many a hurdle before they could succeed in their attempt. But on the score of meeting the Puja expenses the prisoners and the Government fell out and as a last resort all of them went on hunger strike on February 20, 1926. Overawed by the determination of the prisoners the Government had to revise their opinions, and the strike ended on March 4, after a period of eleven days.

His highly philosophic mind, based as it was on a religious outlook of life, discovered the Godhead in the manifestations of Nature.

Writing about a dust storm on the evening of the 16th of March, 1926, in the Mandalay Jail, he discloses a bit of his mind where he finds in the "lurid flashes of lightning" the "terrible beauty of the smile of Kali, the Queen of the Dark." In his own language :

> "The sun fell and the shades of evening descended upon us. But darker even than the evening tints, there rose skyward in the dim distance a dust storm so frequent in Mandalay in summer."

Then describing the darkness outside, and the effect of the dust storm on the prisoners and their belongings in the hall, he writes :

> "...to complete the harmony of the situation the electric current conveniently failed and we were enveloped in what Milton would describe as "Cimmerian darkness." The lurid flashes of lightning served only to "make the darkness visible" (I am again using a Miltonic expression. Is not saintly Milton as effective in his descriptions of darkness as Shakespeare is sweet in his description of 'fairy moonlight'?) and to reveal to the more devoted the terrible beauty of the smile of Kali—the Queen of the Dark (चिन्मय मुखमण्डले शोभे अट्ट अट्ट हासि)

His strenuous attempt to prepare himself for the worst that may befall him in pursuit of his ideal stood him in good stead when a serious illness overtook him in the early part of 1927 and he was faced with a choice of coming out of the prison on certain distasteful conditions or to rot in jail till the Bengal Criminal Law-Amendment Ordinance expired. Subhas named this threat as "the mailed fist in a velvet glove." The main conditions of the terms were that Subhas should leave the country without seeing anybody in Calcutta or elsewhere and he should stay in Switzerland at his own expense. The letters which he wrote to Shri Sarat Chandra Bose in reply to the Government offer were remarkable amongst other features for its masterly analysis of its hidden meaning, unambiguity of language and fortitude of mind in the face of threatened death in British prison or on a hospital cot.

Subhas did not believe that the offer was so simple as it looked on the surface. There was no knowing that the B. Cr. L. Amendment Act will be allowed to expire in January, 1930, the scheduled time, because its operations might be extended by giving it another lease of life; and it might also be that Reg. III of 1818 would be allowed to take its place. He apprehended that he would be a mere sport of the spies of every land, "not only British spies but Swiss, Italian, French, German and Indian spies in the employ of the British Government." As regards the term which enjoined that he should not see any of his relatives and friends before his departure from India, he writes :

> "There is one aspect of the Hon'ble Member's proposal which struck me as particularly callous. Government know that I have been away from home nearly two-and-a-half years and I have not met most of my relations including my parents during this period. They nevertheless propose that I shall go abroad for a period which would be at least two-and-a-half or three years without having an opportunity to meet them This is hard for me but much more so for those who love me whose number is I think very large. It is not easy for a Westerner to appreciate the deep attachment which Oriental people have for their kin, and I hope that it is this ignorance—rather than wilfulness—which is responsible for what I cannot but regard as a heartless feature of the Government offer. It would be typical only of a Western mind to presume that because I have not married, therefore, I have no family (taking the word in its largest issue) and no attachment for any one,"

His critical mind, tinged with the dark hue of pessimism, painted a picture of death in the prison house or a lifelong exile for which he would himself be mainly responsible. Said he :

"I have no desire to become a voluntary exile from the land of my birth",

He again said, he would like

> "to feel myself a free agent before I make my choice and I would prefer not be stampeded into signing my warrant of exile."

After consideration of the whole matter in all its aspects he makes up his mind and writes :

> "I have tried to anticipate the worst that may befall me if I do not accept the Government offer, but I have not been able to persuade myself that a permanent exile from the land of my birth would be better than life in a Jail leading to the sepulchre. I do not quail before this cheerless prospect, for, I believe as the poet does, that 'the paths of glory lead but to the grave.' "

He was sure that "the chances of his release are few and far between" and he requested everybody to accept his choice with philosophic resignation and calm. The first thought that came uppermost in his mind was of causing pain to his parents, and then he thought about his other relations and friends. His words are inspiring to everyone who reads. The passage runs :

> "Let no one grieve that the chances of my release are few and far between. Above all, please console my dear parents, for theirs is the hardest lot, and all those who love me. We have got to suffer a lot, both individually and collectively, before the priceless treasure of freedom can be secured. Thank God! I am at peace with myself, and I can face with perfect equanimity any ordeal that He in His wisdom may choose to visit me with. I regard myself as doing penance in my own humble way for the past sins of our nation and I shall be happy in my atonement. Our thoughts will not die, our ideas will not fade from the nation's memory and posterity will be heirs of our fondest dreams—this is one faith which will sustain me in my tribulation for ever and for ever."

In that extremely delicate state of health he was kept in suspense about the future and his health further deteriorated to an alarming degree. On May 10, 1927, he was placed on a boat sailing from Rangoon and prior to his release he was placed in the Governor's launch at Diamond Harbour on May 16, and brought down to Calcutta and set at liberty.

IN THE FOREFRONT

It took a fairly long time for Subhas to recoup his health; nevertheless it was much less than what others apprehended to it to be. The buoyant spirit, now free from prison, overtook the shortcomings of the flesh and he was again in his field of activity with redoubled vigour. He was soon placed at the head of the Provincial Congress Organisation. He was now like a forlorn traveller in the midst of a multitude. The death of Deshabandhu Das on June 16, 1925, was the greatest shock of his life, and he now found himself in a situation which had great repercussions on his future political career. He had by his side selfless workers who had sacrificed everything and had a record of greater suffering than he himself had. He could rely on the advice of intellectuals that could vie with him in the field of action; and there were other comrades who were competent enough to be his co-workers in every possible way. But these friends all combined together could not occupy the place which Subhas had reserved for Deshabandhu in his heart. To him Subhas could resign and take orders to execute. In him Subhas could rely and would not bother about details of a programme. He was his political *guru*, a person, who according to Subhas, "knows more about ourselves than we do" and thus select a course of action for the disciple much better than the disciple himself can do. Subhas was safe in the background while his leader would fight the battle in the All-India Congress circle and take upon himself all the burden and responsibility while his lieutenants would garner strength for his party.

With the demise of Deshabandhu, Subhas had to undertake all this work. In All-India affairs, his name among others would be suggested for occupying a position of trust and responsibility. The announcement of the appointment of the 'Simon Commission' composed of all Britishers in November, 1927, was received with unmixed opposition throughout India. The Liberals, and the Muslim League declared boycott of the Commission. At the Madras Congress of 1927, held in December, with Dr. M. A. Ansari as President, a resolution was passed boycotting the Simon Commission 'at every stage and every form.' By another resolution the Executive of the Congress was directed to convene an All-India All-Parties Con-

ference with a view to draw up a constitution for India. A declaration was made that the goal of the Congress was 'complete independence'. Subhas along with Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Shuaib Quereshi was appointed the General Secretary of the Congress.

In February, 1927, the Simon Commission reached India and there was a complete *hartal* or boycott-demonstration. In Bengal the *hartal* was more successful than in other parts of India and it was due largely to Subhas's untiring energy and tactfulness that it happened to be so. While other parts of India remained satisfied with declaring *hartal* for the particular day when the Simon Commission had arrived at their respective areas, Bengal kept up the spirit of opposition for long, and in an effective manner, by combining the boycott of the Simon Commission with an intensive boycott of British goods.

The All-Parties Conference met at Delhi in February and March, 1928, and was confronted with the "question of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh representation in the Legislatures under the new Constitution." The Conference again met in May at Bombay and a small Committee was appointed with Pandit Motilal Nehru as Chairman "to determine the principles of the new Constitution and draft a report thereon." Subhas was selected as one of the members of the Committee. Barring certain reservations set out in the preamble the report was unanimous. The difference lay in the objective of the Constitution, *viz.*, while the majority accepted Dominion Status as the goal, a strong minority would remain satisfied with nothing but "complete independence." The opinion of the majority was accepted "without restricting the liberty of action of those political parties whose goal was complete independence." At the All-Parties Conference, held in Lucknow, in August, the younger section again pressed for acceptance of their view. There was a time when voting was about to take place on the issue. If the younger section had won the day, there was the chance of the whole work, including the settlement of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh representation in the Legislature on the basis of universal suffrage and joint electorates, being wasted. Subhas declined to join hands with the 'extremists' on the issue because as he writes :

> "Such a step would have given great satisfaction and delight to the enemies of the Congress, would have weakened the forces working for national unity and would have increased the prestige of the Simon Commission instead of destroying it."

It was an act of supreme statesmanship, and with Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru he decided not to divide the House but "should content ourselves by voicing our protest at the Conference and then proceed to organise an Independence League" so that the country may be prepared to accept their point of view.

From August to December, 1928, events moved rapidly and the communal organisations that had consented to the recommendations of the Nehru Committee pitched their demands higher and higher and the whole progress seemed to be receding backwards. In this background the plenary session of the Congress was held in Calcutta and question of 'Dominion Status *vs.* Independence' again came to the fore. In spite of the Independence resolution passed at the Madras session Mahatmaji would support the first part of the recommendation and "approve of the constitution drawn up by the Committee", while the younger section represented by Subhas, refused "to accept Dominion Status as the basis of the recommended constitution."

There was a tussle over this issue and the stormy petrel of the Congress, the rebel in Subhas, revolted and he openly came into conflict with Mahatmaji and his supporters. In the Subjects Committee Subhas accepted Mahatmaji's formula much against his will under great persuasion of the elder statesmen of India. He yielded because he did not feel himself sufficiently strong to take upon himself the responsibility of leading the country in case his views was accepted by the Congress. He passed a sleepless night over the question and ultimately took up courage in both hands to press forward the views of the advanced section in the open session. His action was severely criticised on this score, but in the speech which he delivered in support of his amendment in the open session on December 31, 1928, he made his position perfectly clear and was nearly able to convince the House about the reasonableness of his stand. According to him, there was nothing in the Nehru Report which could not be applied "in all its entirety to a constitution of independence." As the Bengal delegates as well as the members of the Independence League wanted a clear verdict of the Congress on the issue, and were sure to divide the House, Subhas did not think it wise to remain neutral or go against those with whom his views were completely in accord. He with his friends sincerely felt :

> "that the time is so momentous that India shall express in a clear and unambiguous manner as to what she feels on the issue of Dominion Status *vs.* Independence."

The events that took place throughout the country and the measures

adopted by the Government to stifle political movement prompted him to expect that the Congress "should take up a bold attitude, an attitude which fits in with an attitude of self-respect." Subhas pleaded that the Independence resolution passed at the Madras Congress had enhanced their prestige in the international chess-board and it would be impolitic to go back upon the decision taken in Madras. To those who questioned about the gain which the Congress might derive from acceptance of such an amendment, his reply was :

> "I say, we develop a new mentality. After all, what is the fundamental cause of our political degradation ? That is the question of mentality and if you want to overcome the slave mentality, you will do so by encouraging our countrymen to stand for full and complete independence. I go further and say, assuming that we do not follow it up by action, but by preaching the gospel honestly and placing the goal of Independence before our countrymen we shall bring up a new generation."

He was defeated, but not humiliated. There was a difference of 377 votes in a total of 2,323 votes cast.

As days wore on his opposition to the liberal or moderate views of the Congress became more pronounced. Though in almost every case he was defeated, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his views were being accepted within a year or two after he had expressed them in the open session of the Congress.

When in October, 1929, Lord Irwin announced that a Round Table Conference would be held in London sometime next year, the leaders at an All-Parties Conference, held in Delhi in November, decided to issue a Manifesto appreciating the sincerity of the Viceroy and offering co-operation in the framing of a Dominion Constitution for India. There was vehement opposition from Subhas and his friends, Mr. Abdul Bari and Dr. Kitchlew and they issued a statement to the effect that the representatives should be selected by the Indians and not by the British Government as had been suggested by the Viceroy and that no other party except 'the belligerent parties' should be allowed to sit around 'the Table'.

Again, at the Lahore Session held in December, 1929, under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal, there was a tussle between the official bloc of the Congress and Subhas and his 'left wingers' over most of the important questions that were brought before the Congress. There was

great resentment at the resolution moved by Mahatmaji expressing relief and congratulating the Viceroy on his providential escape when his train was bombed. At Lahore the Congress constitution was changed declaring complete independence at the goal of the Congress. It was an advance on the Madras resolution passed in 1927 which had only accepted Independence, but did not alter the Constitution. There was great confusion in the minds of those supporters of the Independence Resolution as to the means of achieving the goal. The Congress was not only silent on the matter but it openly opposed the resolution, sponsored by Subhas, for setting up a parallel Government in the country. This was also defeated with the result that it remained beautifully vague regarding the programme for the next year's work.

In the Karachi Congress, held in March, 1931, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was ratified and the House was not divided on the issue. The conditions then prevailing in the country did not justify an open breach in the Congress. But the matter was not allowed to go without criticism and the speech delivered by Subhas at the All-India Youth Congress, held simultaneously with the Congress, expressed dissatisfaction against the acceptance of 'the Pact.'

From 1929 Subhas passed more days as a prisoner or an exile than as a free man and the Congress moved forward slowly till the Civil Disobedience Movement was launched by the Congress in 1930 and the entire leadership of the Congress was put inside Jail. When the leaders were released, the country seething in discontent appeared almost calm on the surface.

Students and Youth

With the Congress movement gaining ground there was a great awakening amongst the students and the youth of India. They became conscious of their own strength, and began to organise themselves mostly in support of the Congress programme and sometimes they would go further. There was continuity in the upheaval amongst the students who during the "Anti-partition" days of Bengal in 1905-06 and in subsequent years showed remarkable determination and capacity for suffering and sacrifice. There was no separate organisation of the students in those days. It appeared as a distinct entity in the student days of Subhas and has since then maintained its existence as such with their own programme. The student and youth movement received great impetus from the support of Subhas and Pandit Jawaharlal who represented the impetuosity of youth and the extreme

views trying to capture the Congress. During the Non-Co-operation Movement the students had played a very important part, and without their help the Movement could not have made so much progress. They responded splendidly to the appeal of the Congress leaders to boycott the educational institutions. Their services were in requisition for collecting money and enlisting members of the Congress. Subhas has recorded his appreciation in the following language :

> "It was these student-workers who carried the message of the Congress to all corners of the country, who collected funds, enlisted members, held meetings and demonstrations, preached temperance, established Arbitration-Boards, taught spinning and weaving and encouraged the revival of home industries."

During 1928, when the conflict of the elder statesmen with the younger section became more manifest, the student and the youth organisations sprang up throughout India and held several meetings on an All-India basis. Subhas presided over several Students' and Youth Congresses and Conferences, and in fact he was at the time most popular leader with the younger section of the population. Through him bubbled forth the ideals and ambitions of youth and he became the most pronounced protagonist of their cause. As to the aims and objects of the Youth Movement, Subhas held that "they must have an organisation of their own, if they want to exist as self-respecting individuals and prepare themselves for their future career as citizens of a great country." He further says :

> "The country needs today a movement which will vouchsafe to the individual and to the nation complete emancipation from bondage of every kind as well as the fullest power of self-fulfilment and self-expression."

He would maintain that while the political problems of the country were great, the 'problems of youth' were more important and more vital to the emancipation of the country. Students cannot keep themselves tied to the pages of their books and the curricula of their examinations. In the formative period of life, they should also look to the broader aspects of life and prepare themselves for the struggle that lies ahead of them. They would refuse to be mere 'book-worms, gold medalists and office clerks' but should endeavour to be 'men of character who will become great by achiev-

ing greatness for their country in different shapes of life.' He would expect young men, on whom he reposed such great faith for the regeneration of the country, "to develop their character and personality and thereby render the most effective and useful service to the cause of their country."

Subhas has enunciated what he meant by youth and student movements and what he expected of the youth in the struggle for freedom, not only political but freedom in every sphere of life. About the scope of the 'Youth Movement' Subhas says :

> "The Youth Movement is in its scope co-extensive with life itself. It, therefore, follows that the Youth Movement will have as many departments as there are aspects in our life. If we are to rejuvenate the body, we shall need sports, athletics and gymnastics. If we are to emancipate and re-educate the mind we shall need a new literature, a higher and better type of education and a healthy conception of morality. If we are to rejuvenate society, we shall have to do away ruthlessly with hide-bound ideas and customs and substitute new and healthy ones instead. Further, we shall have to revalue the existing social and moral values in the light of the ideal of the age, and in all probability we shall have to introduce a new scale of values which will govern the society of the future.

He would put the whole thing in a nutshell and say :

> "Broadly speaking, the Youth Movement has five aspects, *viz.*, political, social, economic, physical and cultural. The aim of the movement is a twofold one—to break this fivefold bondage and as a result of this emancipation to give an impetus to self-fulfilments and self-expressions."

The task is great but it should deter nobody. When the motive force has been truly appreciated and the mind is stirred up to action, there is very little which can check the onward march of the youth. There must be before anything else, a revolution of ideas and all these ideas must be based on 'freedom.' The idea of freedom will galvanise the whole life of youth and the students; and the only "method of achieving freedom is for us to think and feel as free men." The rest will follow as a matter of course. Says Subhas :

> "The desire for freedom is the fountain-head of all inspiration, the secret spring of all our creative faculties. When a man is intoxi-

cated with the desire for freedom his whole aspect changes as does Nature under the Magic influence of Spring and he goes through a process of complete transfiguration. We then begin to marvel at the personality he develops and the power that he wields."

The youth of the country should not rest content with political freedom alone. They should go forward, and the concept of freedom with them would be more extensive and be comprehensive of every class of freedom, provided it does not militate against the welfare of the people. What Subhas means by 'freedom' is clear from the following :

"By freedom I mean all-round freedom, *i.e.*, freedom for the rich as well as for the poor; freedom for all individuals and for all classes. This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social inequities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance. This, as an ideal, may appear utopian to hard-headed men and women—but this ideal at once can appease the hunger of the soul."

From the very nature of things, many people would look upon the youth movements as unnecessary; moreover, it might move in channels leading to insubordination and indiscipline. It also might lead to conflicts with authority, with the elderly people, the guardians and parents of the youths and students. But they are expected to cultivate healthy activities, change the outlook of life and always look to the brighter side of it so that by their deeds they may bring glory to themselves and to their motherland. Subhas held very strong views about separate organisations for the youth. Thus he said in November, 1929 :

"The Youth Movement is an emblem of our dissatisfaction with the present order of things. It stands for the revolt of Youth against age-old bondage, tyranny and oppression. It seeks to create a new and better world for ourselves and for humanity by removing all shackles and giving the fullest scope to the creative activity of mankind. The Youth Movement is not, therefore, an additional or an exotic growth superimposed on the movements of today. It is a genuine independent movement, the main springs of which lie deeply embedded in human nature."

The students and the youth to be worthy of their name and be true to their ideals must move like a disciplined army, an army of the "Republic of Youth" and they must have their baptism, initiation, *deeksha*, etc., which was to Subhas, "consecration of our life at the altar of freedom." Said he to the youth of the country that :

> "Luxury, ease and comfort will have to be abandoned, new modes of life will have to be adopted and old habits shunned. Thus will our whole life become a purified instrument for the purpose of attaining freedom."

Conflicts there might be with the authorities, political and educational and there might be sufficient reasons for such conflicts :

> "Not infrequently students come into conflict with the authorities, both educational and Government. Conflicts with the educational authorities usually arise when they are denied their rights as students and with the Government authorities when they are denied their rights as citizens."

Subhas has had his conflict with the educational, and in his case it was also governmental, authorities and as he has said, it "was a turning point in my life's career." Therefore, he was the best exponent of the youth of the country as he could speak from experience and from the suffering that had been his lot. He always maintained his youth and he never aged. The freshness and enthusiasm of youth, resoluteness before danger, never-failing courage, broad vision and spotless moral character had endowed him with qualities to represent the youth's viewpoint before the country. He was their never-failing friend in times of troubles and danger. He will be in the forefront when the youth was faced with a dilemma, created by their own folly and born of inexperience. He would seldom, if ever, decline their invitation to share with them their joys and sorrows and guide them in their deliberations. Subhas so long as he was free, was an embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the youth of India.

Police Batons and the Prison Bars

There was an element of recklessness against physical suffering and loss of liberty in Subhas which made him pre-eminently a leader amongst men. In pursuit of his ideal, in the act of upholding the honour of the Congress

and in maintaining discipline, he would often come into conflict not only with the authorities but at times with his own countrymen resulting in injury to his person. Like many of his co-workers he knew that it was always easy to swim with public opinion and yield to those who held the power of distributing frowns and favours. But Subhas was made of sterner stuff. He would assert his right, the rights of a man having a judgment of his own and working selflessly for the salvation of one's country, regardless of the consequence. In the first C. P. Youth Conference held at Nagpur on November 20, 1929, he expressed his views on the question of 'popularity' in the following language :

> "One who desires to swim with the tide of popular approbation on all occasions may become the hero of the hour—but he cannot live in history, neither he can create history. If we aspire to become makers of history we should be prepared for any amount of misunderstanding and for any degree of persecution. For the most unselfish actions we should be prepared to get abuse and vilification; from our closest friends we should be prepared for unwarranted hostility."

He acted up to this ideal and he would not care for any loss of popularity or the suffering that it might entail. He was bold in the face of danger and very often his courage overruled the sense of security against physical violence. In 1928, he was, as G.O.C. of the Volunteer Corps, in charge of the Congress pandal at Park Circus. There was a demand from about 30,000 factory labour gathering at the place from workshops situated in or around Calcutta for free admission into the pandal. They wanted to watch the deliberations of the Congress occupying seats for which others had to pay. Subhas could not allow these men to enter the pandal unless there were orders from the proper quarters. He wanted to resist entrance of these men with his handful of volunteers. He stood firm and the situation was tense. He was in constant danger of violence by that huge mob. It was only possible of Subhas and a few of his trusted comrades to think of offering any resistance at the moment. There was also the chance of the pandal being completely destroyed by the infuriated mob. Subhas undertook to protect it with his life. The President of the Session, Pandit Motilal Nehru, was summoned to the scene. He was struck with Subhas's courage but was not very sure about the effectiveness of resistance. He ordered Subhas to control the crowd in a manner so that they might enter the pandal in an orderly fashion. Subhas, as a disciplined soldier, obeyed

his general. The situation was saved and he became the idol of his men for the courage that he displayed against heavy odds.

In 1930, at Tatanagar, at a meeting of the Trade Union Congress, brickbats like hailstones came down on him, the President, and his friends on the dais. This was an act of a rival group. Subhas sustained injuries and was advised to disperse and take shelter in a safe place. The intrepid heart refused to be overawed by the enemies. The meeting proceeded and the shower of brickbats did not subside. His audience wanted to make a counter charge. This was not allowed and the meeting ended peacefully. His stand was thoroughly vindicated and the prestige of his party was enhanced.

In the Alipore Central Jail, on April 21, 1930, there was a 'lathi' charge by the jail warders on the Mechuabazar Bomb Case undertrial prisoners for their refusal to enter into the prison van that would carry them to the court. It was the result of accumulated grievances against the Superintendent of the jail and when they got the opportunity of meeting together they demanded a promise for removal of those grievances before they could be forced into the van. Subhas with three or four others of his fellow-prisoners appeared on the scene and protested against the inhuman treatment meted out to the undertrial prisoners. While they were being forcibly carried into the van, the Pathan warders of the jail were ordered to make a charge on Subhas and his friends standing nearby. Some, who knew discretion to be the best part of valour, silently withdrew leaving Subhas and two or three others to face the music. Subhas was rendered unconscious by severe blows from the warders before he could be removed from the place. He went there to protest against the wrongs perpetrated on the undertrial prisoners and it was impossible for him to leave the place without sharing the sorrows of those who were his compatriots in the struggle for liberation of India.

It was the Independence Day, *i.e.*, January 26, 1931, and Subhas, then Mayor of Calcutta, went out of the Corporation buildings at the head of a big procession to participate in a meeting to be held at the foot of the Ochterloney Monument. There was a ban on such meetings and processions at the time. To submit to such orders was to allow the police to spread its tentacles to other field of Congress activities. Further, it was humiliating to the self-respect of Subhas Chandra not to hold any meeting on the Independence Day of the year. On his way to the venue of the meeting, along with some comrades including the Education Officer and the Deputy License Officer of the Corporation, he was seriously assaulted. All of them

bled profusely from their heads and broken limbs. The mounted armed police tried to snatch away the Congress Flag which Subhas was then holding in his hands. He would not yield and until he was thoroughly overpowered and completely exhausted, fingers of his right hand suffering from multiple fracture, he held the banner aloft and history was written on the 26th of January, 1931, in letters of blood at a place within few hundred yards' distance from the Government House, Calcutta.

There are other instances of his valour and presence of mind in the face of danger which ultimately contributed in the making of the Supreme Commander of the Azad Hind Fauj. He was equally reckless of the loss of personal liberty. To achieve some political ends he would ignore the provisions of Sec. 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code restraining him from moving into certain quarters and entering into prohibited areas. He would force his way to Barrackpore where a labour rally was being held, and be detained in the police lock-up. He would proceed to the Maldah District against the orders of the Magistrate and be tried in the first class compartment of a train and be sentenced to an imprisonment for seven days. He must proceed to Dacca in the discharge of his duties as a member of the Congress Enquiry Committee against the orders of the Magistrate and be held guilty of violating the provisions of Sec. 144 and thrown into the prison. Beginning with 1922 when he was convicted for the first time in his life he had on many occasions been convicted of offences against the State in addition to detentions without trial. In January, 1929, he was convicted for leading a procession in August, 1928, on the Political Sufferers' Day in South Calcutta. For leading the procession on the Independence Day in 1931 he was convicted on the 27th of January. In 1925, he was arrested and detained in the Burmese prisons for more than two and a half years. In 1932, while returning from Bombay, he was arrested on January 2, and was detained in India without trial till March, 1933, and his health being deteriorated, he was allowed to proceed to Europe for treatment. He came back to India without the permission of the Government in December, 1934. He was forced out of India in the next January (1935) and remained mostly in Central Europe till April, 1936, when he came back to India against the orders of the Government. He was arrested in Bombay on board the 'S. S. Conteverde' and kept in different jails in India when there was such a serious set-back to his health that a Medical Board had to recommend his release. He came out of the Medical College Hospital in March, 1937, and remained in India up to November of the same year. He had again to leave for Europe for medical treatment and while he was there he

was elected President of the 51st Session of the National Congress. As in the case of many others, even the Presidentship of the Congress did not spare him from being an inmate of the prison thereafter, and in 1940, he was arrested again in July under the Defence of India Rules and thrown into prison. At the time he was conducting a movement for the removal of the Holwell Monument situated in the heart of the city. In 1940, for his alleged activities against law and order either through speech or act including writing articles in newspapers, he had at least four cases pending against him, when due to hunger-strike resulting in extreme prostration he was released on December 5, and kept under surveillance in his Elgin Road residence. That this was the last record of his prison life in India.

When persons holding positions of trust and responsibility lose all faith in the Administration carried on under the direction of foreigners and become reckless about the batons and prison bars, there is hardly any nation which can maintain domination over a people whose leaders set examples before them of supreme sacrifice in receiving bullets and batons and developing a thorough disregard for loss of liberty. From the very childhood courage never failed Subhas and it reached the culminating point in the shape of the General of the Indian National Army which waged relentless war on Indian soil against heavy odds. Many a brave heart would have quailed before undertaking such an adventure extending from Singapore to Manipur with resources disproportionately inadequate for the purpose and with a band of followers to whom he could only give blood, toil and tears. He failed, no doubt, in his undertaking, so also did Rana Pratap, but he has carved out a glorious place in history bringing to him immortality with those who had struggled for the liberation of their motherland.

In Conflict with the Congress

Subhas' life is an unending story of conflict with those who held India in bondage and also against those who, in his opinion, were instrumental in retarding the progress of India's march towards freedom. Like many others of his colleagues, especially in Bengal, he was not beset with the inner struggle of reason with passion, of religious and moral principles against urgent and almost irresistible solicitations of an easy-going life. He was known to have been able to choose the right with invincible resolution and resist the sorest temptations from within and without. He always bore the heaviest burdens cheerfully, and had the characteristic quality of remaining calm before storms and the most fearless under menace and

frowns. He had started his political career with opposition against the accepted views of the Congress, *i.e.*, boycott of the Legislatures and conducted himself all along as the accredited Opposition of the Congress. Even while outside India he acted as the watchdog of the Congress Left Wing and from his sick-bed at Geneva in May, 1933, he, together with Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, expressed dissatisfaction against the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement by Mahatmaji. They called it as "a confession of failure." Subhas in his written address as President of the All-Parties London Conference, where he was not allowed to proceed from Vienna, used still more strong words in giving an indication of his disappointment at the turn of events in India. Said he:

> "If the Delhi Pact of 1931 was a blunder, the surrender of 1933 was a calamity of the first magnitude. By suspending the Civil Disobedience Movement at a critical hour, work was suffering and the sacrifices of a nation for the last thirteen years are virtually undone."

His absence from India for a fairly long time and his services to his motherland during his stay in Europe helped to blunt the edge of opposition against him to a certain extent and he was suffered to become President of the Haripura Congress in 1938. It may also be that the Congress having accepted Ministry in the provinces, the control of the major activity of the Congress had shifted to the Parliamentary Board under Sardar Patel and that constitutionalism had come to stay in the Congress for a considerable time. Therefore, the election of Subhas, belonging to the Left-Wing, might act as a sop to them without interfering with the authority of the Right Wing.

When the question of election of the next Congress came to the fore and Subhas with others stood as a candidate, the whole outlook underwent a rapid change and stiff opposition was kicked up by certain members of the Working Committee together with Gandhiji. In the background of this opposition there had worked the spirit of damage to political reputation of certain members of the Working Committee through occasional criticism of their policy. As far back as 1929, Subhas had resigned from the Congress Working Committee due to differences of opinion with the majority of the members. This was surely an affront to the prestige of the Working Committee. At the Lahore Congress he, along with Shri Srinivasa Iyengar, an ex-President of the Congress with extreme views, was excluded from the

Working Committee as Mahatmaji "wanted a Committee that would be completely of one mind," and there would be nobody to strike a discordant note at deliberations of the Congress High Command. Moreover, he actually moved in the open session for acceptance of the principle of election of the Working Committee from among the members of the All-India Congress Committee. and he was defeated.

The Congress Working Committee was ushered into existence in the Nagpur Session to help the President of the Congress in his functions and had all along been the nominees of Mahatmaji. Subhas was not satisfied with the procedure and was strongly opposed to it. He made no secret of his views and his remarks were couched in a very strong language. A man of sturdy independence, he maintained that there should be freedom of thought and judgment in persons ruling the destiny of a nation. Subhas writes:

> "The leader of the Congress is Mahatma Gandhi—who is the virtual dictator. The Working Committee since 1929 has been elected according to his dictation and no one can find a place on that Committee who is not thoroughly submissive to him and his policy."
>
> And again,
>
> "The Congress Working Committee to-day is undoubtedly composed of some of the finest men of India—men who have character and courage, patriotism and sacrifice. But most of them have been chosen primarily because of their 'blind' loyalty to the Mahatma and there are few among them who have the capacity to think for themselves or the desire to speak out against the Mahatma when he is likely to take a wrong step. In the circumstances, the Congress Cabinet of to-day is an one-man show."

The result of such concentration of power in the selection of the Working Committee personnel in the hands of Mahatmaji has not been beneficial to the country and he writes:

> "Since their (Deshabandhu, Pandit Motilal and Lalaji's) death the entire intellect of the Congress has been mortgaged to one man and those who dare to think freely and speak out openly are regarded by the Mahatma and his disciples as heretics and treated as such."

He felt that many who could play their part creditably in a difficult situation, who with encouragement and sympathy could render better account

of themselves and add more prestige to the National Organisation, were not allowed to do so. On the other hand. they were being suppressed in all possible ways and relegated to obscure positions. He felt very sore over it. Such was his feeling over the matter that in writing about his appreciation of Swami Vivekananda he went a little off his way, and said:

> "Swamiji did not desire or attempt organisational work in the way of Swami Dayananda or as the Arya Samajists did. That may be a failing, but he used to say of himself, 'Man-making is my mission.' He knew that if the country could grow up really great men then organisation could be completed in no time. He took great pains to train his disciples and never attempted to cripple their individuality or curb their free-thinking. To this end he would not keep a disciple near him for a long period. He used to say that under the shadow of one big tree another big tree could not possibly grow. *What a contrast with some of our latter-day great men who cannot tolerate independent thinking and who desire that we should mortgage our intellect at their feet and permit them to do all the thinking for us.* (Italics mine).

His differences with the Congress Working Committee regarding policy and programme of the Congress were numerous and he would not allow any occasion to pass off silently if there were grounds for comment. He seriously criticised the decision of winding up the British Branch of the Indian National Congress in London and stopping publication of its organ *India.* He of all persons in the Congress circle had been consistently harping on the idea of foreign propaganda, and in this respect he received the support of Vithalbhai Patel in an ample measure. Hostility towards his policy was not uncommon, but in this the spirit of Vithalbhai must have sighed in anguish when it came to know that certain legal quibblings had deprived Subhas of the sum that he had bequeathed to him for carrying on one of the most important items of work of the Congress. Law, certainly, was vindicated and Subhas was denied the advantage of the money. Never was it known afterwards that the said sum had been earmarked to fulfil the last wishes of one who had earned the money himself, who had served his country to the best of his ability and who had cherished the best interests of his country even unto his last breath. But politics is politics, and when it is the rage for power and influence in a political organisation, nothing counts, fair or foul.

TRIPURI CONGRESS CONTROVERSY

The Tripuri Congress was the culminating point in a series of encounters between Subhas and his friends of the Left Wing on the one hand and the Old Guard of the Congress on the other. For the Presidentship of the 1939 Session, ideological conflicts that had so long remained underneath—the conflict of ideas of 'honourable compromise' and unrelenting struggle with British Imperialism till independence had been achieved, came on the surface.

The three candidates were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramiya and Subhas Chandra Bose. There was nothing unusual at the start, because every year several names were proposed, out of whom one was selected. In the fateful year of 1939, matters took shape very early and it became manifest that there was going to be an election contest for the Presidentship with all its implications. The reasons for a group of members of the Working Committee supporting the candidature of one in preference to another, and its President to boot, was not very clear at the beginning. It subsequently, after the election controversy had proceeded a long step forward, transpired that Sardar Patel and some of the members of the Working Committee had held consultations at Bardoli a long before the election and had decided to put up Dr. Pattabhi as a candidate and all this was done behind the back of the President.

Very quietly a certificate of good character and fitness was issued by Maulana Saheb, a rival candidate, supporting the candidature of Dr. Pattabhi. He said that he was glad that he had been able to prevail upon Dr. Pattabhi not to retire from the contest though he was "about to withdraw his candidature under the impression that I would not withdraw my name." The reasons adduced for keeping Dr. Pattabhi in the arena were:

> "He is an old member of the Congress Working Committee and an indefatigable worker."

But why he should contest Subhas was not given out. Maulana Azad simply "commended his name to the delegates for election and sincerely hoped that his election would be unanimous."

To the eternal credit of Subhas he avoided all personal references in this fight and refrained from describing the various 'qualifications' which had entitled him to the presidentship for a second term. His arguments were based on political considerations and his sole aim was to get one as President who would represent some definite political ideas. According to him,

"The presidential election in India should be fought on the basis of definite problems and programmes so that it may lead to the clarification of the working of the public mind."

His conception was that the issues involved in the election were not persons and personalities but definite ideals and principles, and they were only two in number:

(1) The fight against Federation, and

(2) Free and unfettered choice for the delegates in the matter of choosing their President.

A second testimonial in favour of Dr. Pattabhi was issued for the enlightenment of the electorates with a view to divert their attention from the issues raised by Subhas. Dr. Pattabhi's supporters wanted to make it more weighty by the signature of six of the most important members of the Working Committee, *viz.*, Sardarji, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya Kripalani, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Mr. Sankar Rao Deo and Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram. It ran as follows:

"We believe that Dr. Pattabhi is quite fitted for the post of the President of the Congress. He is one of the oldest members of the Working Committee and he had a long and unbroken record of public service to his credit. We, therefore, recommend his name to the Congress delegates for election."

This was followed by "as regards my qualifications I beg to state" from the candidate himself:

"If I am elected I should regard my election as an appreciation of my effort on behalf of the States. I am working as President of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, and as a member of the Working Committee I have come across cases of indiscipline and corruption in Congress ranks. If elected, I should devote my energy also to putting our own house in order."

According to Dr. Pattabhi himself, he could not check corruption and indiscipline in Congress ranks as President of the Andhra Congress Com-

mittee and these vices had grown while he was a Member of the Congress Working Committee for many years. It was never suggested that he and his esteemed colleagues on the Working Committee had not had unfettered freedom of action in tackling the problems that demanded his services as the President of the Indian National Congress.

Statements, letters, telegrams volleyed forth from the 'Big Guns' of the Congress conveying the idea that the re-election of the President was an exceptional affair, that it should be unanimous and that the election of Subhas would be harmful to the country's cause.

In this unseemly controversy Subhas all along maintained a dignified attitude and displayed marvellous skill in presenting his point of view before the delegates and the public at large. He was not for voting by delegates for the mere fun of it, and he would have been glad to retire in favour of a "person who will be anti-Federationist to the core of his heart —a person who will command the respect and confidence of not merely of the Right Wing but also of the Left Wing." In his opinion Pandit Jawaharlal "fulfilled this role in a magnificent manner. And perhaps, I may humbly claim, that I did so though in a much lesser degree." His contention was

> "Let the Right Wing who are in a decided majority in the Congress make a gesture to the Left Wing by accepting a leftist candidate even at this late hour...And I am prepared to withdraw from the contest if a genuine anti-Federationist like Acharya Narendra Deo, for instance, be accepted as the President for the coming year."

There was nothing exceptional in re-election of the same person for the Presidentship. There was nothing in the constitution to prevent re-election and that it is a known fact that several ex-Presidents of the Congress had held that office for more than one term. In this particular case, Subhas said that "Congressmen in different parts of the country have individually, collectively and publicly advocated my re-election." The points raised against re-election failed to produce any effect on the delegates entrusted with the task of election of the President.

To the charge that the "presidential elections have hitherto been unanimous", Subhas retorted by saying that it was a most surprising statement not founded on facts. "I remembered to have voted for one candidate in preference to another on several occasions" was his rejoinder. He further said that

"It cannot be doubted that my re-election would have been virtually unanimous if they had not sent out a mandate to vote against me. It now appears that they would rather have anybody else than my humble self."

Subhas wondered how being members of a democratic institution like the Congress the leaders, now pitched against him, were afraid of an open election.

"If the ruling group within the Working Committee had made a happy choice, no contest would have taken place this year. But if their choice or suggestion does not meet with the popular approval, should not the delegates be free to exercise their vote as they think best ? If this freedom is not guaranteed to them then the constitution of the Congress will cease to be a democratic one. It is no use having a democratic constitution for the Congress, if the delegates do not have the freedom to think and vote as they like."

He was opposed to a group "within the Working Committee to claim that they will dictate the selection of the President every time." And when elections are to be held then as they should be in case democracy was to advance on proper lines, it is "essential that the delegates should have a free unfettered choice." But the issue was clouded by repeated statements by Right Wing leaders, not as independent Congressmen, but as members of the Working Committee. It was certainly unfair to the President of the Working Committee, especially so when the Committee had never discussed this question." Perhaps, every unbiassed opinion will support Subhas' contention that "I was treated most shabbily by my eminent colleagues on the Working Committee and there can be no doubt that I am the aggrieved party." They exerted whatever influence they had against him and Subhas detailed his grievances in the following words:

"If the presidential election is to be an election worth the name, there should be freedom of voting without any moral coercion. But does not a statement of this sort tantamount to moral coercion?

Subhas declined to accept the proposition that the position of the Congress President was akin to a constitutional monarch and had very little to do with initiation of policy, etc. "The position of the President to-day is

no longer analogous to that of the chairman of a meeting", said Subhas. In his opinion it was more onerous and with the growing responsibility of the Congress, "new conventions should grow up around the Congress President and his election." He compared "the position of the President with the Prime Minister of Britain, or the President of the United States of America who nominates his own Cabinet."

Subhas asked: "Do they object to me because I would not be a tool in their hands, or do they object to me because of my ideas and principles?"

No answer to these questions were forthcoming from any quarter till the election drew nearer and nearer, and it was discovered that remarks, following remarks made by Subhas in connection with his choice for a Leftist President was taken exception to. These were

> "It is widely believed that there is a prospect of a compromise on the Federal Scheme between the Right Wing of the Congress and the British Government during the coming year. Consequently, the Right Wing do not want a Leftist President who may be a thorn in the way of a compromise and may put obstacles in the path of negotiations."

When the election ended in Subhas' victory and the Saint of Sabarmati had treated it as his personal defeat, accusations were thrown out that he had "questioned the *bona fides* of some eminent members of the Working Committee." Subhas replied by saying that nowhere he had made "any allegation against any particular Congress leader, whether he be a member of the Working Committee or otherwise." He had only stated the wide belief that took possession of the public mind "that in due course, office-acceptance in Provinces would be followed by the acceptance of the Federal Scheme, perhaps with some slight modification."

The Haripura Congress had resolved against "Federation" and it was difficult to understand why an anti-Federationist could not be accepted as President thereby allying public suspicion to a large extent. This and "several other factors", said Subhas, "contributed to deepen the doubt and suspicion in the public mind." Nothing was done to counteract this charge and the supporters of Dr. Pattabhi only tried to cloud the issue by introducing extraneous and irrelevant matters and thereby lost the election.

If Subhas had sinned against persons in authority he was punished first by a veiled "motion of no-confidence" passed at Tripuri and secondly by expulsion from the Congress for trying to bring Congressmen round to his views on matters that did not involve the fundamental principles of the

Congress. Personal *vendetta* followed his track till he was out of India. The attack continued long after he had immortalised himself by his daring and had glorified his motherland by an effort to free her from foreign domination. It took a long time to disabuse the minds of his political opponents and to extract from them a recognition of the selfless services of a persecuted but selfless worker of the Congress.

At the end of the controversy it tickled out that there was some truth in the public suspicion regarding compromise on the score of federation. It may be wrong but the point is, was there any reasonable ground for such belief? It is hazardous to say anything either way but two remarks of Gandhiji, germane to the issue, may be quoted. Said Gandhiji on November 8, 1939, that "there can be no civil-disobedience so long as the Viceroy is exploring the possibilities of a settlement." And again on January 20, 1940, wrote Gandhiji in *Harijan*

> "I am not spoiling for a fight, I am trying to avoid it. Whatever may be true of the members of the Working Committee, I wholly endorse Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's charge that I am eager to have a compromise with Britain if it can be had with honour. Indeed, Satyagraha demands it......I have not lost faith in Britain."

The drama of Tripuri was one of the most remarkable chapters in Subhas' life. It disclosed his courage of conviction and the brave heart that did not countenance injustice or partisanship in any shape or form.

His Reaction to Injustice

The *Tribune* of Lahore gives the right appreciation of Subhas when it writes:

> "Mr. Bose was an embodiment of C. R. Das's spirit fighting against everything that smacked of oppression and for everything that led to the national glory."

Subhas has given an estimate of himself and the words that he uttered from time to time regarding submitting to injustice, etc., show the mettle of which he was made. Said Subhas,

> "It is more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong."

He further said:

> "To purchase one's continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself rather than pay this price."

This was his life's motto and he fulfilled it in the various walks of life that covered many phases and wore numerous facets. To his loving countrymen he would say:

> "Forget not that the greatest curse of a man is to remain a slave. Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong. Remember the eternal law—you must give, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against iniquity, no matter what the cost may be."

Subhas fought and suffered and gave up all that man holds dear to his heart. He has earned immortality and has left imperishable glory for the land where he was born and for the emancipation of which he played so glorious a part

SUBHAS—THE MAN

In India and abroad Subhas Bose is known as an indefatigable fighter for his country's freedom who knew no rest and admitted no defeat. He has earned for him 'immortality' for which he aspired and for the attainment of which he worked ceaselessly and selflessly. In his exhortations to the students and the youth of the country, he would request them, in the face of grave and impending danger, to think of Mother India and the deathless fame that would survive the pathfinders in the difficult march towards freedom.

IN FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE

So much of his life has been engrossed by his political career and the glamour of his achievement in the field of politics, more so as "Netaji" of the I.N.A., that one is apt to overlook the greatness of the man that Subhas was. In the home he was an affectionate and dutiful son, a loving kin, a devoted brother, a tender and sympathetic friend, great favourite of the children of the family and his friends. He was very fond of them and possessed a profound warmth of feeling and a large fund of jokes for them.

He was greatly attached to the servants of the family and they in their turn were greatly attached to them.

To comrades and co-workers he was more than a brother, a never-failing friend. In want, affliction and distress, his name would first cross the mind; because he would share sorrow with the sufferers. There was seldom, if ever, any occasion when men in want would come away disappointed from him. He would not think about his purse but would beg or borrow to help men in difficulty. His attachment to his friends would often bring him to the side of sick-bed. He would weep like a child at the loss of friends and would reserve a corner of his mind for the wellbeing of the dependents of the deceased. To aspirants to a settled life he would always stretch his hands of fellowship and would try to render all help possible in him.

His Habits

His habits were simple and wants very small. His dress and his bed were plain and his belongings very few. Yet he was not devoid of an aesthetic sense in him. He hated gaudiness but was a lover of beauty of form. of setting, of nature. Artificiality in every sphere was destasteful to him.

In matters of diet he was again very simple; but he would not reject or refuse a dainty dish. As a disciple of Vivekananda, he would not eschew fish or meat from his menu. But he would display special liking for village specialities, preparations of coconut (*chinir-puli, monohara, narikel naru, rascara,* etc.), of gram (*chholar-barfi*), of fried paddy (*murir naru, moa, khaichur*), of sesamum (*tiler naru, tiler chakti*), fruit jellies (*chatni, morobba of karamcha,* etc.) and other cheap and unrecognised 'dainties.' He would like to take his meal with the members of the family or his friends and it was not uncommon that he would invite friends to his table at odd hours of the day or night much to the annoyance or inconvenience of the housewife-in-charge of the kitchen. Usually, due to his delay in finishing the day's work, he would be alone at the table in the evening or near about midnight with the fond mother dozing and enquiring about his wants. For simplicity in diet and his daily habits he was always at home in unaccustomed surroundings, in distant villages, in the poor man's hut and in the palaces of kings.

He would often rise late from bed, keeping up nights for urgent work, deep study and not unoften, meditation. The barber would shave him in the morning while he would be lying on his back in the bed with half-closed eyes. He would start the day with a cup of tea, and tea he would

take in plenty, sometimes twenty or thirty cups a day. He would go on working without food for hours at a stretch and unless forced by demands on his time he would take his morning meals long after the sun had past the meridian. In this respect he was a bit unkind to his attendants and even to his friends. His comrades or co-workers would share the same fate and would be found leaving him at night when there would be very little time for taking a good sleep.

His Unpunctuality

One who has been known to the world for exploits in a field where punctuality is the most important factor, was, strangely enough, himself an extremely careless person about keeping his engagements in time. He would be often late sometimes up to twelve hours. His loving heart would seldom refuse an invitation from friends at social functions at their respective homes. Subhas would readily accept such requests and in most cases would attend them personally unless unavoidably prevented. Friends would wait and wait till he would come very late, and on one occasion at a marriage ceremony held at a distance of less than two miles from his Elgin Road residence, he appeared on the scene at about 11 A.M. next day instead of 10 P.M. the appointed hour, on the previous evening. His friends and chauffeur would fret and fume at the chances of missing the train by which he was to travel, the attendant at the station, sent there beforehand to find out his berth, would implore of the guard to delay the starting of the train by a few seconds running at times into minutes. He would be found entering the platform smiling when the engine had been steaming, the starting bell rung and the train at times, on the move.

He was extremely slovenly in the management of his routine business; important business would wait till the last moment. Somebody must rush in a car to the General Post Office or the Railway Station to deposit important letters in the post box with the late fee paid. For want of time in securing water for fixing stamp, he would look round and unless water would be near at hand, he would lick the stamp, fix it on the envelope and hand it over to the attendant waiting listlessly at the door. Everybody around him knew that the last moment would spring a surprise in respect of certain essential documents or some other important business overlooked through leisureliness before. His friends would always keep themselves in readiness for such emergencies, occurring almost everyday and smile away the transitory irritation that Subhas would display at the seeming unpreparedness of the friend that would accompany him in his tour.

PILE OF UNANSWERED LETTERS

Subhas had had an extremely facile pen and he would begin writing a sentence with clear thoughts and appropriate words that would not rush against each other impeding the easy flow of his writing. He would very seldom write a word twice over and reject any portion that had come out of his pen. Yet his correspondence would pile up on his table and most of these would remain unanswered. Subhas, therefore, gained an amount of unpopularity on this score. Of the letters that demanded prompt attention, he would select some and place them on the top of the pile that swelled every day; late comers always finding shelter at the bottom of the heap.

Subhas was always hard pressed for time; yet he would bother himself with the details of work that had been entrusted to a dependable person. He would never feel satisfied till he had seen it for himself that everything had been moving in the manner he liked. This practice absorbed a good deal of his time and caused an amount of uneasiness in those who had been placed in charge of the work. He would write everything out for himself, every speech, every letter, and in case a friend had, at the request of Subhas, ventured a draft, he would revise it out of recognition. There is seldom anybody who can claim to have written out a speech or a letter for Subhas unless they were of a trivial nature. His mastery of the English language and the style that was Subhas' own, encouraged nobody to write out anything for him.

Subhas suffered from the lack of a secretary worth the name. He had friends who could help him in various ways, but there was, according to him, none on whom he could depend absolutely for every job. Friends he had many, but at the moral and intellectual plane in which Subhas kept himself a prisoner, there was none to whom he could confide and unburden his heart. Thus an amount of aloofness grew around him wherein he would roam like a lone traveller groping his way towards solution of the problems of life and making his sojourn towards the Great Unknown.

DESHABANDHU'S INFLUENCE

The untimely death of Deshabandhu deprived Subhas of the much-needed guidance at a time when the exuberance of youth takes the uppermost in political workers. It had been the greatest tragedy of his life and it is known that he grieved the loss of Deshabandhu much more than he did at the demise of his parents. By nature and training, and for the fact that he lacked many ties that make men cautious in life, he was rather

impatient and wondered at the slow progress that the Congress made towards the attainment of *Swaraj*. The check that Deshabandhu exercised over him having been removed by Providence, he became a little intolerant of criticism, a drawback which he, perhaps in a degree, imbibed from his political *guru*. His other *guru*, Swami Vivekananda; was never known to have suffered from an overdose of humility, and Subhas' life was faintly tinged with its colour. But as a political worker he never allowed such feeling to gain upperhand in him. Ordinarily he was submissive and accommodating, but he never allowed, especially when principle was involved, submissiveness to degenerate into surrender. In political pourparlers he was rather inept and his outspokenness, when silence would have been golden, had caused him much trouble and inconvenience and created many opponents for him.

There was sufficient justification for such an attitude of his. He was a man with very few failings, moral or otherwise, and he set up a standard of conduct before him which was rather difficult of attainment by the common man. From day to day he moved forward towards positions of greater responsibility and far greater risk and he felt dismayed to notice his comrades-in-arms falling back one by one and making compromises with forces with which they had all along been fighting together. Having had very few occasions to compromise or yield in private life, he found it difficult to come to terms with his adversaries, which with many others would have been an easy task.

His actions have been criticised, at times, by those who should have known him better. He was accused of 'double game' where the causes for such criticism did not at all exist. Yet to those who would fail to understand his motive and join hands with the reactionaries in decrying him, he would say: "I cannot go wrong as long as I am sincere and earnest—even if my progress towards Truth be more zig-zag than straight. After all life's march is not as straight as a straight line."

But nowhere would Subhas lose his inner self. In lax surroundings he would be slovenly, unmethodical and unpunctual, but in hours of need the same man would be active and regular, orderly and tidy and punctual to the minute. Those who have seen him in England during his studies there or the life he led as "Netaji" in the camp and the jungles, will be able to throw much light on this aspect of his character and will be able to dispel all doubts about his capacity for systematic work.

His Attitude Towards Sex

Subhas combined in himself, so far as women were concerned. the qualities of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, one giving every woman the place of a mother, and the other giving them a place of equality. In Subhas' own words, it was very easy to maintain physical purity (alas, for the common man), but it required great *sadhana* to raise oneself to the state where one loses the sense of the difference between the sexes. The only way to attain such a stage was to look upon every woman, irrespective of her age, as the representation of the Mother. Those who know him intimately can say that he reached such a stage in his life, and it was one of the greatest triumphs of his that he had lost all sense of enchantment from female charms.

His Faith in Providence

Religious to the core from early boyhood, he placed absolute faith in the Divine Dispensation and would leave everything to God. He was a worshipper of *Shakti* (Primal Energy)—and her various symbolic representations—Goddesses Kali and Durga, and would make obeisance to the images of the Goddesses in public. His blemishless life, always striving for greater and greater *strength*, is an embodiment of the tenets of the Upanishads. His leanings were towards Hinduism shorn of its conservatism or orthodoxy. He was not content with what he propagated by the example of his life or through his speeches. From the following words we know what Subhas was searching for even in the midst of daily troubles and turmoils that beset him in his struggle for freedom—freedom of the country and, may be, freedom of the Soul. Said he:

> "There is nothing that lures me more than a life of adventure away from the beaten track and in search of the Unknown. In this life there may be suffering, but there is joy as well; there may be hours of darkness, but there are also hours of dawn. To this path I call my countrymen."

JAI HIND

"In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish—but ideas, ideals and dreams do not look ahead, March forward.

Freedom is yours,

—*Subhas Chandra Bose*

THE FORWARD MOVEMENT WITHIN THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

BY HARI VISHNU KAMATH

What in me is dark, illumine,
What is low, raise and support.

Of Netaji, the intrepid warrior-statesman, who, amid the raging conflagration of World War II, brought into being the Provisional Government of Free India in distant Shonan (Singapore), and under its aegis wrought the miracle of the *Azad Hind Fauj* on the battle-field of South-East Asia, much has been told and more has been written, to the ever-increasing delight, wonder and admiration of an incredulous and sceptical world. Netaji, the romance of whose army is redolent of the heroism which Shivaji, Washington, Garibaldi and Kemal Ataturk infused into their ill-clad, ill-fed and ill-equipped followers, has attained to an eminence among the leaders of the Liberation War of Humanity and secured an abiding place in the Pantheon of History. His name is now heard across distant seas and in distant lands. The story of how Indian men, women, and even children, quite ignorant of modern warfare, flocked to his banner in their thousands, heedless of consequence, inspired by the effulgent light of a deathless ideal, does not lose interest in the telling. We know very well how, with the clarion call for Unity, Faith and Sacrifice, Netaji, in the face of heavy odds that at times seemed almost insuperable, led the civilians as well as the soldiers of the *Azad Hind Fauj*, along the arduous path of starvation, forced marches and death, towards the promised land of Hindustan exhorting them in the name of the Goddess of Liberty, in the name of *Mahashakti* (Primal Energy), with the ringing words—'Give me blood, I will give you freedom'. In what manner he thus powerfully re-inforced the 'Quit India' struggle of the Congress by his 'Chalo Delhi' campaign, we have read and heard in adequate measure. But the hardly less tempestuous career of Subhas Chandra Bose, who, along with a few other dauntless spirits, worked ceaselessly to inspire, guide and mould the Forward Movement within the Congress in the twenties and thirties of this century is not so very well known. It shall be my endeavour to trace briefly the growth and evolution of this movement and to season the narrative with



Dr. Dharmavira and Netaji Subhas Ch. Bose



Hitler greeting Netaji Subhas Ch Bose

Netaji Subhas Bose and General Tojo

a few personal reminiscences of the great leader, whom I was privileged to know fairly intimately for three years before he left India on his high mission.

2. What made Netaji a grand creative rebel, ever pressing forward, ever discontented and ever at war with his milieu ? Fundamentally, he lived, moved and had his being in the vast expanse of the Spirit, and the environment of a slave country accorded ill with such an ardent nature. A spiritual quality, indefinable and intangible, pervaded all his actions. Like unto the ocean, he was always restless, yet ever at peace, which flowed from the poise and tranquillity of his inner being. This was reflected in the invincible calm of his face and his disarming smile: to know him was to love him. From his early boyhood, when he journeyed alone to the Himalayas in search of spiritual salvation up to the years of his mature manhood, when he journeyed beyond the borders of India in search of political salvation, his life has been all of one piece, the life of a born rebel, whom the call of the suffering millions of a slave nation turned into an uncompromising political revolutionary. He regarded his entire life as a spiritual mission in the highest and noblest sense of the word and this was clearly brought out in the title 'An Indian Pilgrim', which he had adopted for his unfinished autobiography. He was not a mere politician, but one of the greatest revolutionary leaders that have figured on the world stage in recent times. He was endowed with dauntless courage, lofty ideals, a clear vision, farsighted statesmanship and tremendous powers of organisation Not infrequently described as the stormy petrel of Indian politics, his meteoric career showed that he was in his element during times of strenuous conflict and struggle. He throve on opposition, which evoked all that was best in him: he rode the whirlwind and directed the storm. But through all the years he was animated and inspired by an 'Idée Fixe', the sublime idea of India's emancipation.

3. The time and manner in which Subhas Chandra Bose made his debut in Indian politics is significant of the man. Resigning the Indian Civil Service in England itself, not long after passing the competitive examination with flying colours, he returned to India and went straight to Mahatma Gandhi, who, launching the barque of Congress on the stormy uncharted sea of mass resistance, and thus initiating a bold, forward movement, had called the nation to suffering and sacrifice and was preaching, with religious zeal, the gospel of non-co-operation with a Satanic Government. "Sedition is my religion" declared Gandhiji, and the tense atmosphere in the country in those stormy days of 1920-22 was akin to that of a

religious revival. The message of the Mahatma spread like wild fire to the remotest nook and corner of India, quickening the pulse of an oppressed nation struggling to be free, and raising its tempo to fever heat. The movement engulfed the whole country, drawing all, intellectuals, educated and the professional classes no less than the broad masses within its vortex, so much so that the then Governor of Bombay was constrained later to admit that "it came within an ace of success." At such a time, Subhas, a young man of twenty-four moved by a flaming patriotism and a supreme abandon that stakes all at the altar of an Ideal, approached Gandhiji, praying for guidance. The Mahatma was not slow to perceive the passion for freedom that consumed Subhas, and accordingly directed him to Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, who had, in the meantime, flashed on the Indian political firmament and become the undisputed leader, the uncrowned king, of Bengal. Subhas, whose inner spiritual being had already been nurtured on the fiery genius of Swami Vivekananda, soon came under the spell of C. R. Das and readily accepted him as his political *guru.* The latter, who discerned his sagacity and his fortitude much beyond his years, often used to jocularly refer to him as 'the young old man'. Later in life, Subhas's militant nature was profoundly impressed by the redoubtable valour and the consummate political skill and strategy of Eamon de Valera, Lenin and Kemal. Subsequently. the disciplined dynamism of Herr Hitler and his stern gospel of action also appealed to him, although he did not subscribe to his political creed. Thus, by the time he attained the maturity of manhood, he had achieved the difficult and rare synthesis of the saint and the warrior—a *Kshatra* (warrior) *Sadhu,* in fact. It was this that enabled him to preserve a stoic tranquillity, even while engaged in ceaseless action and struggle, and it was this unique harmony which enabled him to live serenely in the face of danger, opposition and even persecution. He toiled and laboured joyously, albeit without respite, in the material, work-a-day world, because at heart he was an indomitable Soldier of the Spirit and bathed his inner being, his mind and soul, ever and anon, in the life-giving waters of the Eternal.

4. Subhas Chandra Bose first proved his mettle in the thorough manner in which he worked for the total boycott of the Prince of Wales in Calcutta in 1921; subsequently his capacity for organisation and executive ability were amply demonstrated in the discharge of his duties as Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation during the mayoralty of C. R. Das. Government, however, was perturbed and frightened by his activities and so, without much ado, they clapped him behind the bars in

distant Mandalay on the trumped-up charge that he was actively sympathetic to the terrorists of Bengal. A man of action to the core as he was, he languished in jail:

> Formed to combat with his kind,
> Strong in his frame, and of a mood
> Which against the world in war had
> Stood and perished in the foremost
> Rank with joy, but not in chains to pine.

His body wasted away, the fell disease of tuberculosis was eating into his vitals, yet his resolute spirit and stupendous power of will never gave way. This was evinced in the letters he wrote from jail.

5. Thousands of patriots were at the time suffering in prison and outside for the crime of loving their country. To this trial many had been called, but few chosen for the ordeal of solitary detention without trial under the obnoxious Regulation III of 1818. Subhas was one of these privileged few, and as his physical condition fast deteriorated in jail, it "threw a halo round the head of this man from Orissa, who resigned the Indian Civil Service for conscience' sake, and defied the bureaucracy and all its works for three years, although failing health did not ameliorate the conditions of durance in a Burmese jail" ('Ditcher' in *Capital*, the weekly organ of British trading interests in Calcutta). Prolonged incarceration and enforced seclusion, however, enabled him to ponder deeply over the political problems of the country and the development of our freedom struggle. When ultimately, late in 1927, his unconditional release was ordered on medical grounds, he soon began to take an active part in political life despite his shattered health. He devoted his time and attention to the organization of youth and to the Trade Union Movement.

6. When in 1928 the Motilal Nehru Committee declared in favour of Dominion Status, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose stoutly opposed it and asserted that they would be satisfied with nothing short of complete independence for India. The formation of an Independence League was also announced and agitation began in full swing for basing the future constitution of India on complete independence. At the Calcutta Congress in 1928, presided over by Motilal Nehru, where Subhas Chandra Bose was G.O.C. of Congress Volunteers, to the main resolution generally approving of the recommendations of the Nehru Committee, amendments of an identical nature were moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra

Bose. Their aim was not to accept, even by implication, Dominion Status for India, as contemplated in the constitution drawn up by the All-Parties' Conference. They did not, however, succeed; but, undaunted, they pursued their efforts after the Congress Session. The youth movement received a tremendous impetus; Naujawan Sabhas and Students' Organisations were formed all over the country. The youth movement was especially strong in Bombay and Bengal, and young men took a very prominent part in the country-wide demonstrations against the Simon Commission. Feeling in the country ran high on account of the one year's ultimatum that had been delivered to the British Government at the Calcutta Congress, and the Lahore Congress, held on the banks of the Ravi in 1929 under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru, adopted a resolution declaring that the goal of the Congress was complete independence or *Poorna Swaraj*, involving severance of the British connexion. Thus, the campaign in which Subhas Chandra Bose had played an important part, bore fruit at Lahore and soon after this, the Independence League was dissolved, as its object had been accomplished. Thus, we see Subhas Chandra Bose working in the twenties of this century for the radicalisation of the Congress, the organisation of youth, and a strong Trade Union movement, so as to broad-base the Congress on the strength of India's manhood and on the toilers in India's fields and factories, a step which carried the Congress forward on the path of struggle.

It will be interesting to recall here that Subhas desired to move an amendment to the Independence Resolution at Lahore to the effect that independence should be defined in terms of political and economic freedom of the masses in order that they might be enthused to make the requisite sacrifices in the freedom struggle; but the amendment was put aside. Nevertheless, this showed in which direction the mind of Subhas was working.

7. Gandhiji's Satyagraha Movement of 1930 again found Subhas in the thick of the fight, and Government soon arrested him and lodged him safely in jail. When the movement was called off in March 1931 upon the conclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Subhas, who along with others found himself also at liberty, raised his voice in protest against the Pact and the suspension of the movement, especially when patriots like Bhagat Singh and his associates were not saved from the gallows. He presided over the Conference of the All-India Naujawan Sabha at Karachi in 1931 and his subsequent activities brought him into conflict with the law very soon, with the result that he was once again detained under the infamous Bengal Regulation. In a year or two, his physical condition

became so alarming that he was allowed to proceed to Europe for the purpose of recouping his shattered health. Abroad, he took a forward step by establishing centres in different European capitals with a view to promoting politico-cultural contacts between India and Europe. The Congress had so far not paid much attention to this type of work, and Subhas was among the first to stress the necessity of such propaganda in our fast-changing interdependent world.

8. Returning to India in 1936 in defiance of a State ban on his entry, he was arrested and imprisoned for a year; a Government spokesman stated that 'a man with Subhas Bose's intellect and his powers of organization would be a danger to any State.' But soon after the General Elections of 1937 and the accession of the Congress to power in several Provinces, Subhas was set at liberty, and shortly after unanimously elected President of the Haripura Congress, 1938.

9. At this point, it is as well that we should note the strategic and tactical skill of Subhas, the hard-headed political realist, but free from the cynicism of 'Realpolitik'. Though an unbending and uncompromising revolutionary, with his heart, mind and soul set upon one goal and one alone, he was no rigid doctrinaire as regards the means to be adopted for the attainment of that goal. This, of course, does not mean that he approved of any and every method which might fritter away the energies of the individual or the nation. *For him solid organization was the first essential of success, and disciplined unity of action the path to the goal.* Given these two, the effectiveness of a particular method at any particular time was weighed by him in the historical context of the situation—internal and international. This was amply demonstrated by his policy and programme during World War II, within India and without.

10. With the *fait accompli* of office acceptance by the Congress in the Provinces under the scheme of truncated provincial autonomy, Subhas Chandra Bose as Congress President attempted to devise ways and means of utilizing office and power for a revolutionary purpose. In a masterly dissertation on 'The *Pros* and *Cons* of Office Acceptance' written in August, 1937, he discussed the militant role of Congress Ministries in the furtherance of our freedom struggle. With flexibility and elasticity of tactics which characterizes a revolutionary of clear vision, he brushed aside the tendency to make a fetish of the oath of allegiance incumbent on all members of the Assemblies and Ministers. He observed that the matter was merely in the nature of a constitutional formality, and cited the example of de-Valera who after having taken the oath moved for the abolition of the oath. The

revolutionary potentialities of Congress Ministries he stressed in his Presidential address at Haripura in February, 1938. It was notable for its clarity with regard to what should be Congress policy in the new epoch, and to a certain extent it foreshadowed the emergence of the Forward Bloc in the Congress a year later. To that speech therefore we must now turn. In view of its intrinsic importance, I make no apology for quoting *in extenso* from the Haripura address:—

"The acceptance of office in the Provinces as an experimental measure should not lead us to think that our future activity is to be confined within the limits of strict constitutionalism. There is every possibility that a determined opposition to the forcible inauguration of Federation (under the Government of India Act, 1935) may land us in another big campaign of civil disobedience. In our struggle for independence we may adopt either of two alternatives. We may continue our fight until we have our full freedom and in the meantime decline to use any power that we may capture while on the march. We may, on the other hand, go on consolidating our position while we continue our struggle for *Poorna Swaraj* or complete independence. From the point of view of principle, both the alternatives are equally acceptable and *a priori* considerations need not worry us....in either case the ultimate stage in our progress will be the severance of the British connexion. When that severance takes place and there is no trace left of British domination, we shall be in a position to determine our future relations with Great Britain through a treaty of alliance voluntarily entered into by both parties......I have been greatly impressed by the attitude of President de-Valera. Like the President of Eire, I should also say that we have no enmity towards the British people ....Once we have real self-determination, there is no reason why we should not enter into the most cordial relations with the British people. . . . . . .

"There can be no question of the Congress party withering away after political freedom has been won. On the contrary, the party will have to take over power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstances, standing behind the State, will convert that State into a totalitarian one; but I cannot admit the charge. The State will possibly become a totalitarian one, if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should be banned. The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress party will prevent the

future Indian State becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust upon the people from above, but are elected from below. . . . .

"There are people in the Congress like myself who would like to see the Congress participating more actively in the movement of the States' subjects. I personally hope that in the near future it will be possible for the Congress to take a forward step and offer a helping hand to our fellow-fighters in the Indian States. . . . .

"Only by emphasising our common interests, economic and political, can we cut across communal divisions and dissensions. A policy of live and and let live in matters religious and an understanding in matters economic and political should be our objective. The Congress stands for the political and economic rights of the Indian people as a whole. If it succeeds in executing its programme, the minority communities would be benefited as much as any other section of the Indian population. Moreover, if after the capture of political power, national reconstruction takes place on socialistic lines—as I have no doubt it will—it is the 'have-nots' who will benefit at the expense of the 'haves', and the Indian masses have to be classified among the 'have-nots'. With regard to the question of religion and culture, the Congress policy is one of complete non-interference in matters of conscience, religion and culture as well as of cultural autonomy for the different linguistic areas. While unifying the country through a strong Central Government, we shall have to put all the minority communities as well as the Provinces at their ease, by allowing them a large measure of autonomy in cultural as well as governmental affairs. Muslims have nothing to fear in the event of India winning her freedom—on the contrary, they have everything to gain. So far as the religious and social disabilities of the so-called depressed classes are concerned, it is well known that during the last seventeen years, the Congress has left no stone unturned in the effort to remove them, and I have no doubt that the day is not far off when such disabilities will be things of the past. . . . .

"To promote national unity, we shall have to develop our *lingua franca* and a common script. So far as our *lingua franca* is concerned, I am inclined to think that the distinction between Hindi and Urdu is an artificial one. The most natural *lingua franca* would be a mixture of the two. As regards the script, I am inclined to think that the ultimate and the best solution would be the adoption of a script that would bring us into line with the rest of the world. Perhaps, some of my countrymen will gape with horror when they hear of the adoption of the Roman script, but I

would beg them to consider this question from the scientific and historical point of view. There is nothing sacrosanct in a script...So far as our masses are concerned, since more than 90 per cent are illiterate, and are not familiar with any script, it will not matter to them which script we introduce when they are educated. The Roman script will, however, facilitate their learning a European language. . . . .

"To solve the economic problem, agricultural improvement will not be enough. A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under State-ownership and State-control will be indispensable. However much we may dislike industrialism and condemn evils which follow in its train, we cannot go back to the pre-industrial era, even if we desire to do so. It is well, therefore, that we should reconcile ourselves to industrialization and devise means to minimize its evils. We will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socializing our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation. . .

"How can we strengthen and consolidate the Congress while our Ministers are in office ? The first thing to do is to change the composition and character of the bureaucracy. If this is not done, the Congress party may come to grief. The outlook and mentality of the permanent services is in most cases neither Indian nor national, and a national policy cannot be executed until the permanent services become national in outlook and mentality. Secondly, our Ministers should, while they are in office, introduce schemes of reconstruction in the spheres of education, health, prohibition, prison reform, irrigation, industry, land reform, workers' welfare etc. In this matter, attempts should be made to have, as far as possible, a uniform policy for the whole of India. . . . .

"On our success in resisting the imposition of Federation by the British Government will depend our immediate political future. We have to fight Federation by all legitimate and peaceful means—not merely along constitutional lines—and in the last resort, we may have to resort to mass civil disobedience which is the ultimate sanction we have in our hands. There can be little doubt that in the event of such a campaign being started in the future, the movement will not be confined to British India but will spread among the States' subjects. . . . .

"It is desirable for the leftist elements in the Congress to be consolidated into one party. A leftist bloc can have a *raison d'etre* only if it is socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a bloc being called a party, but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that bloc a group, league or party. Socialism is not an immediate problem for

us—nevertheless, socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the country for socialism when political freedom has been won. . . . .

"I attach great importance to the question of a foreign policy for India and of developing international contacts. I believe that in the years to come, international developments will favour our struggle in India. We must have a correct appreciation of the world situation in every stage and should know how to take advantage of it. In connexion with our foreign policy, the first suggestion that I have to make is that we should not be influenced by the internal politics of any country or the form of its State. In this matter, we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a Communist State, her diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with non-socialist States and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should make India and her culture known to the world. Propaganda through the foreign press, through Indian-made films and through art exhibitions would be helpful. Above all, personal contacts are necessary. If we go ahead with this work, we shall be preparing the basis for our future embassies and legations in different lands. Developing international contacts does not however mean intriguing against the British Government. All our methods should be above board. The propaganda that goes on against India all over the world is to the effect that India is an uncivilized country and it is inferred therefrom that the British are needed in order to civilize us. As a reply, we have only to let the world know what we are and what our culture is like. If we can do that, we shall create such a volume of international sympathy in our favour that India's case will become irresistible before the bar of world opinion. I must also stress the desirability and necessity of developing closer cultural relations with our neighbours, *viz.*, Iran, Afghanistan, Nepal, China, Burma, Siam, Malaya, East Indies and Ceylon. . . . . . .

"The Congress today is the one supreme organ of mass struggle. It may have its right bloc and its left—but it is the common platform for all anti-imperialist organizations striving for Indian emancipation. I would appeal specially to the leftist groups in the country to pool all their strength and their resources for democratizing the Congress and reorganizing it on the broadest anti-imperialist basis. Ours is a struggle, not only against British Imperialism, but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the key-stone. We are, therefore, fighting, not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved."

The address is remarkable for its perspicacity, for its political insight and acumen, and enables us to understand clearly the *weltanschaung* of

Netaji. Some of the ideas he enunciated might have sounded unorthodox at the time, but on the whole, his stand has been vindicated by the subsequent development of the international situation and the ultimate formulation of Congress policy. Much of what he said and did later on, inside India and outside, can be better appreciated in the light of the Haripura address. The year that followed in the wake of Haripura saw the steady worsening of international relations, and clouds of war gathering on the European horizon. As regards the internal situation, Congress Ministries tried to make the best of their job, in the face of Imperialist obstruction and communal obscurantism. The Viceroy announced the decision of the British Government to inaugurate the Federal Scheme at the Centre at an early date; against this Subhas thundered and threatened to launch a raging and tearing campaign throughout the country in the event of any attempt at the introduction of Federation. His stiff opposition to the possible acceptance of the federal part of the Government of India Act went a long way to sustain the militant elements in the Congress and the country. The year drew to its close, and the Presidential election to the Tripuri Congress took place early in 1939. For the first time in the history of the Congress the election was openly contested; the candidates were Subhas Chandra Bose and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the latter being backed up by Mahatmaji and the Congress High Command. The fight appeared to be on the issue of a compromise with British Imperialism as envisaged in the Federal Scheme, and this was deprecated by Subhas in view of the fast deteriorating international situation and the certainty of another war. He declared that Congress and the nation had to be fully prepared for the final onslaught on British Imperialism, when the opportunity would present itself in the near future. He was re-elected to the Congress Presidentship, but unfortunately the event, unique in the annals of Congress, provoked a crisis within the organization. Gandhiji observed that Subhas' victory was his defeat, although it was universally felt that it was uncharitable and unfair to Subhas in the extreme for Gandhiji to say so. The members of the Congress Working Committee resigned, saying that they did not desire to stand in the way of Subhas Bose having new colleagues for the execution of his policy and programme. Subhas however kept his head cool in the midst of the gathering storm and from his sick-bed at Tripuri he declared in March, 1939 with amazing, almost prophetic foresight, that an Imperialist war would break out in Europe within the next six months, that Congress should deliver a six months' ultimatum to Britain, and in the event of its

rejection, they should launch a country-wide struggle for *Poorna Swaraj*, taking full advantage of the entanglement of Britain in the international imbroglio. This warning and advice however went unheeded, and further the constitutional right of the President to nominate his own Working Committee was sought to be curtailed through a resolution asking the duly and democratically elected President to nominate his colleagues on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. Subhas Bose planning for unity of action was anxious to have a composite Cabinet representing all groups in Congress in view of the crisis to which the world was heading, but Gandhiji and the old members of the Working Committee championed the cause of a homogeneous Cabinet. Despite Pandit Nehru's mediation, Subhas' efforts to form a composite Cabinet as the *sine qua non* for an effective national struggle proved unavailing. Subhas, when he found that he had not the liberty to nominate even three colleagues of his choice on the Working Committee, decided it was futile in the circumstances to continue as Congress President, while unable to carry his point of view or implement his policy and programme. He, therefore, resigned his high office in April at the Calcutta Session of the A.-I.C.C. It is however a tribute to his revolutionary genius that he was not out to disrupt or weaken the Congress at a time of grave international crisis and active internal ferment; he was fully alive to the colossal task of forging the Congress and the nation as a solid phalanx against British Imperialism and its exploitation of Indian resources in the event of war. Any split in the Congress would have defeated this purpose which he clearly envisaged. For the democratization, radicalization and the reorientation of the Congress into a sharp instrument of the people's will to freedom he announced the formation of the Forward Bloc within the Congress early in May, 1939. Its advent was not surprising in the light of the pronouncements that Subhas had made the previous year at Haripura.

11. Subhas Chandra Bose declared that the Forward Bloc came into being to fulfil a historic necessity, the necessity of consolidating all the anti-Imperialist forces in the country for the inevitable struggle. He said that "it was desirable that the internal crisis in the Congress should come and should be transcended before the international crisis overtook us." Contrary to hostile propaganda, the Forward Bloc was intended to strengthen the Congress as an organ of the people's struggle against the impending Imperialist war and was accordingly conceived as a platform for all the progressive, radical and anti-Imperialist elements within

the Congress. "Left consolidation, winning over the majority in the Congress, and the resumption of the National struggle, these represented the three-fold task before the Forward Bloc in the Congress." Accordingly, early in June, 1939 a Left Consolidation Committee was formed under the leadership of Subhas Bose, and in it were represented the Congress Socialist Party, the Communist Party (National Front), the Radical Democratic Party (of M. N. Roy), the Trade Unionists, the Kisan Sabha as well as the newly-born Forward Bloc. The first All-India Forward Bloc Conference convened in Bombay was addressed by representatives of all these groups, and they unanimously adopted as their goal—the attainment of complete political independence for India and the establishment of a free Socialist State. A resolution advocating country-wide preparation for an anti-Imperialist struggle to be launched in British India as well as the Indian States, so as to take advantage of the rapidly gathering clouds of war for the overthrow of foreign rule was also carried. The Forward Bloc thus became the spearhead of the impending struggle, which was universally regarded as ineluctable in the given situation.

12. A few days later, the All-India Congress Committee at its session in Bombay adopted a resolution prohibiting Congressmen from offering Satyagraha without the previous sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned. Considering that the supreme need of the hour was the psychological and physical preparation for an extensive no less than intensive struggle, this resolution was interpreted as a direct challenge to the growing militant forces within the Congress, who, at the time, were concentrating their energies on the development of local *kisan-mazdoor* struggles and the starting of new local offensives, which were to culminate in an India-wide offensive at the opportune moment. The fighting forces in the Congress were not to be curbed and checkmated in this fashion, and so the Left Consolidation Committee decided to organize protest meetings all over the country on July 9, with a view to asserting the inherent democratic rights of Congressmen. Rajendra Babu, who had been elected Congress President on the resignation of Subhas Bose, warned Congressmen against participation in the intended demonstrations, but nevertheless, meetings were held in numerous places recording the protest of Congressmen and appealing to the A.-I.C.C. to rescind the resolution. On the eve of July 9 the Royists precipitately retreated and permanently withdrew from the Left Consolidation Committee. The Congress High Command directed that disciplinary action be taken against all Congress office-bearers who had joined the 9th July demonstrations, and in August Subhas Babu himself

was removed from the Presidentship of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and further debarred from holding any elective office in the Congress for a period of three years. Action was taken on similar lines against protestant Congressmen all over the country, in spite of the fact that they had merely voiced their dislike of the resolution, but had not defied it in action in any manner whatsoever. However the incident and its sequel showed which way the wind was blowing.

13. Subhas Bose accepted the result unperturbed, without the least trace of wrath or malice and in a mood of philosophic calm, declaring that Congress had become to him dearer than ever. He appealed to all fellow-fighters to go ahead undeterred and to be ready for the final assault on the Imperialist citadel, and expressed his confidence that sooner or later, the entire Congress would have to come on the path of struggle.

14. In September, 1939 the Fascist-Imperialist-War broke out in Europe, Hitler having invaded Poland on September 1, and Britain and France having declared war on Germany two days later. The prophecy that Subhas Bose had made at Tripuri came true, almost to the very day. The Governor-General by a special Ordinance, declared India a belligerent country, and India was thus dragged into the Imperialist war without even so much as a formal consultation with her leaders and elected representatives in the Central and Provincial Legislatures. Congress by its previous resolutions on the subject was committed to resisting exploitation of her resources for the predatory Imperialist war. Yet the Congress High Command marked time by demanding of the British Government a clear enunciation of its war and peace aims and carrying on fruitless negotiations with British Imperialism. Even after the resignation of the Congress Ministries in October, 1939, consequent upon the unsatisfactory pronouncement of the Viceroy in answer to the Congress demand, no bold forward step was taken with a view to forging the necessary sanction behind the national demand for freedom and independence.

15. It cannot be gainsaid that it was Netaji, almost alone among Indian leaders, who consistently preached a relentless opposition to the war and with remarkable clarity of vision saw through the tangled skein of world events, and moulding his policy and strategy accordingly, executed it with consummate skill, tireless industry and superb valour.

16. When, even after meeting with a rebuff at the hands of the British Government, Congress leadership refused to embark on the path of direct action, Mahatma Gandhi even declaring that he would not embarrass the British Government during the War, Subhas Bose con-

vened an Anti-Imperialist Conference at Nagpur in October, 1939, and there reminded the Congress and the nation of their historic task of consolidating all anti-Imperialist forces in the country against war and for storming the Imperialist citadel. The militant forces in the country, under the leadership of Subhas Bose and the Forward Bloc, fast gathered strength and momentum, and almost simultaneously with the invasion of Norway and Denmark by Hitler in April, 1940, the Forward Bloc launched a country-wide Satyagraha struggle, calling upon the people not to help the Imperialist war with men, money or materials, and to resist by all means and at all costs the exploitation of Indian resources for the preservation of the British Empire.

17. Earlier, in March, an Anti-Compromise Conference was held at Ramgarh, in Bihar, under the joint auspices of the Forward Bloc and the Kisan Sabha. Subhas Bose presided over the Conference, and at the same time and place, Congress too held its plenary session. The stand taken by the Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh was truly worthy of a revolutionary party pledged to complete independence and socialism. The Conference resolved that "the sixth of April, the first day of the National Week, should mark the commencement of country-wide Satyagraha against the war effort and the nefarious designs of British Imperialism; that the day should symbolize the resolve of the Indian people to withdraw themselves from forcible participation in the war and to make the final effort for the achievement of India's independence. Once the struggle began, there was to be no rest, no break, no Chauri Chaura as in 1922, no Delhi Pact as in 1931, no side-tracking of the struggle as happened in 1933, when the Harijan movement was launched." The Conference issued a clarion call "for initiating and intensifying local struggles of workers and peasants and co-ordinating them with the vast National Struggle of the people by rallying all the anti-Imperialist radical and progressive forces in the country under a common banner, the banner of Liberty and under a common slogan of 'Freedom, Peace and Bread'." To those who said that war was indivisible. the Forward Bloc gave the crushing retort that freedom was no less indivisible, and that the world could not endure, half-slave and half free. In the end, the Ramgarh Conference appealed to the freedom-loving men and women of India to line up in the great struggle for liberty, and though their difficulties would be manifold and their suffering immense, not to flinch for a moment but to have confidence in themselves and in their national destiny, and exhorted them to remain united in the firm conviction that India and the world

stood on the threshold of a new age, the age of freedom, democracy and socialism.

18. We have already seen how M. N. Roy with his Radical democrats dissociated himself from the Left Consolidation Committee in July, 1939, and was shortly afterwards expelled from the Congress for openly preaching participation in the (according to him) Anti-Fascist war, quite contrary to the Congress denunciation of it as an Imperialist war to which slave India could not be a willing party. At Ramgarh the Congress Socialist Party deserted the Forward Bloc and Left Consolidation Committee on the ground that a countrywide anti-Imperialist struggle, as contemplated by the Forward Bloc, was inadvisable: it sounded strange in the mouth of professedly militant socialists! The National Front Group (Communist Party) behind the camouflage of anxiety for a United Front also refused to join the struggle, though clamouring all the while for mass action. A year later, on the invasion of Russia by Hitler, they were to perform a disgraceful *volte face*, asserting that the Imperialist war had been transformed into a People's War even for India groaning under the heel of an alien Imperialism, and deliberately setting at naught the Marxist-Leninist thesis about the revolutionary utilization of an Imperialist War for the freedom movement of slave peoples in colonial countries. Instead of converting the war into a war of Indian liberation, they aligned themselves brazen-facedly with British Imperialism, and stabbing in the back the Indian freedom struggle, they maligned and calumniated Congress, and slandered and traduced the Forward Bloc as the Fascist Fifth Column, calling Netaji, 'traitor, hangman and puppet of the Axis Powers.' History has shown indubitably who played the freedom-saboteur's ignoble role in India during the critical war years: not for a long time to come will the traitorous, the anti-national and counter-revolutionary role of the Communists and the Royists be forgotten by the Indian people.

19. The Indian people. hungry for freedom, participated in their thousands in the struggle launched throughout the country by the Forward Bloc on 6th April, 1940. Hundreds were gaoled, many more were beaten and harassed, civil liberties curtailed and the heavy hand of repression descended on the people. The tremendous response heartened Subhas Babu and at the Nagpur Session of the All-India Forward Bloc held in June 1940 and presided over by him, the Ramgarh stand was reiterated and further clarified in the context of the rising tempo of the Indian struggle. It was at Nagpur that the Forward Bloc decided to function in future as a party, and not as a platform, in view of the defections from

the Left Consolidation Committee. In view of the fast-developing war situation in Europe, and the near certainty of other continents being drawn into the maelstrom, the Forward Bloc demanded the immediate establishment of a Provisional National Government in India, and under its aegis, the formation of a National Defence Brigade for the effective defence of India against foreign invasion. The nation was advised to march under the slogan of 'All Power to the Indian People', for the final conquest of power. Further, with regard to the organs of struggle and of seizure of power, the Conference resolved that

"in order to carry on the struggle efficiently and also to take over the responsibility of administration when the necessity arises, People's Panchayats should be set up in every village as well as in every factory. It is desirable that the Panchayats should be the product of local initiative and as far as possible, endeavour to develop the initiative of the masses. who have long been in the habit of taking orders from above. These People's Panchayats, backed by volunteer organizations, should be the bulkwark and the popular sanction behind the demand for a Provisional National Government of the Indian people to whom all power should immediately be transferred."

The objective of the Forward Bloc henceforth to function as a party was also set forth. The relevant portion of the resolution reads as follows:

"In view of the unprecedented crisis which has overtaken this country, the duties and responsibilities which devolved on the Forward Bloc have considerably increased. The Bloc can hope to discharge them satisfactorily only if it can develop sufficient cohesion and if it can function as a well-knit, disciplined organization. This Conference, therefore, resolves that henceforth the Forward Bloc will function as a party. It will be a party within the Congress with mass membership. The objective of the Forward Bloc will be the capture of political power by the Indian masses as early as possible and the reconstruction of India's national economy on a socialist basis."

20. Soon after Nagpur, Subhas Bose was arrested in July by the Bengal Government on the eve of the anti-Holwell monument Satyagraha in Calcutta, and sent to jail. Two cases were started against him, but during the prosecution he resorted to hunger-strike in jail, whereupon he was released early in December, 1940. In the following month, on the historic Independence Day, January 26, 1941, an astounded world heard the news that Subhas Bose had suddenly disappeared from his house under the very nose of the C.I.D., who were on guard day and night. It was not until

many months later that news trickled in from abroad that he had gone out of India with the avowed intention of furthering India's freedom struggle. He made a pointed reference to this in one of his broadcasts, saying—"My object in leaving India was to supplement from outside the struggle going on at home." With a view to strengthening our movement and weakening the strangle-hold of British Imperialism, our sole enemy, he strategically concluded a politico-military alliance with the enemies of our enemy, Germany and Italy, on terms of complete equality; later, he was to strike a similar alliance with Britain's mortal foe in the East, Japan. Thus was a new, glorious and thrilling chapter opened in our protracted freedom's battle, and history will record how, "recognizing Britain's difficulty as our opportunity," Netaji made a bold bid for freedom, whose repercussions are felt today not only in India but over all Asia as well. Netaji has thus played a distinctive role in our struggle for national emancipation, and if the British Government has today visibly relaxed its grip over India, it is due to Netaji's magnificent endeavours outside India, no less than to the struggle waged by us inside her borders.

21. I am digressing, but it was not quite out of place. Just before Subhas Babu's departure from India, the Congress under the leadership of Mahatmaji had initiated in October, 1940, the very restricted individual Satyagraha movement as a symbolic protest against the war. It went on for a year, but failed to produce the desired impression or moral effect on the die-hard Imperialist Churchill Government, which Mahatmaji had hoped for. In December, 1941, the storm broke out in the Far East, and the rapid victory of Nipponese arms in a wide sweep from Hongkong and Shanghai to Burma appeared more like an elemental cataclysm than a mere triumph of arms and military skill. The British Empire in the Far East toppled like a house of cards, and the crash evoked a thrill of joy in the hearts of the enslaved and oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa. It was more a measure of the hatred against British and other Imperialisms than any innate love of Japan, though the feeling of immense satisfaction over the rout of an arrogant white Western Power at the hands of a coloured Eastern, did not fail to swell our hearts with pride and joy.

22. The phenomenal success of Japanese arms alarmed the Churchill Government and Sir Stafford Cripps was commissioned to win over India to help prosecute the Imperialist War against Germany and Japan. Again the Forward Bloc within India, and Netaji without, entreated Congress leadership to reject the Cripps' offer summarily, and it was fortunate for our freedom movement that the Congress ultimately decided against accept-

ance. The same thing was repeated in June, 1945, when on the collapse of Germany, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy, invited the Congress to form a Government explicitly with a view to vigorously carrying on the war against Japan, in short, to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Britain by assisting in her reconquest of the Far Eastern territories. But luckily the Wavell Conference also ended in fiasco, and the Congress was saved from the ignominy of bolstering up British Imperialism at the fag-end of the war. Netaji and the Forward Bloc can rightly claim to have enabled the Congress to stand firmly on the anti-war path, and to have been the vanguard of the struggle waged by the Congress and the nation in 1942 and after, against the mightiest Imperialism in history.

23. The hollow cant of the Cripps interlude and its aftermath convinced Mahatma Gandhi of the utter hypocrisy of British professions, and of their well-laid conspiracy to foil India's struggle for independence. Gandhiji saw, as in a flash, that the only salutary solution of the crisis was for the British to "Quit India". He began preaching this idea in the columns of the *Harijan*, and thus helped to re-create a militant atmosphere throughout the country. In the meantime, Netaji from abroad and the Forward Bloc at home were indefatigably summoning the nation to battle, with the result that the Forward Bloc was declared an illegal organization on 22nd June, 1942.

24. On the fateful night of August 8, 1942, a clarion call to Britain to "Quit India" was given by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay. For many weeks leading up that day, the emotions of the people had been worked up to a high pitch by the passionate writings of Gandhiji, the fervid speeches of leaders like Sardar Patel and most of all, by the fiery broadcasts of Netaji appealing to the people to rise and throw the British out of India. To an American journalist who asked Gandhiji why he could not wait for Indian freedom till the end of the war, he replied, calmly but significantly: "Go and ask Subhas. Such a passion for freedom animates us all today." The All-India Congress Committee, on August 8, demanded the withdrawal of British power from India: "The Committee, therefore, resolves to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle." Still further, the Committee envisaged the form of Government that would be ushered in after the exit of British authority, when, essentially all power and authority must belong to the toilers in fields, factories and elsewhere,

The stand thus taken by All-India Congress Committee in August, 1942, was a complete vindication of the policy and programme that the Forward Bloc had consistently advocated ever since the commencement of the war.

25. The course of events that followed in the wake of the August resolution is too recent to recapitulate in any great detail. Suffice it to say that no sooner were the Congress leaders arrested, than the people rose up in fury, and though devoid of preparation and deprived of leadership, spontaneously revolted against foreign tyranny. The rebellion showed what reservoirs of initiative and energy lie hidden in the common man, and how on crucial occasions they come to the surface. In many tracts of the country, the British Raj was liquidated, and People's Raj proclaimed as a result of the heroic assault of an unarmed people fighting with their backs to the wall. Imperialist vengeance and repression knew no bounds: hundreds of thousands paid with their lives for resisting British authority and for espousing the cause of freedom, suffering indignities, insults, imprisonment, torture, the *lathi*, the gallows, the bullet, the machine gun and all other weapons in the armoury of a repression that defied description. Though we failed to achieve *Poorna Swaraj*, the stupendous sacrifice was not in vain:

> "Eternal Spirit of the Chainless Mind!
> Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! Thou art,
> For there Thy habitation is the heart,
> The heart which love of Thee alone can bind.
> And when Thy sons to fetters are consigned
> To fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom
> Their country conquers with their martyrdom
> And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind."

The August revolution and the "Chalo Delhi" campaign were the twin facets of a total struggle for India's liberation. We may have failed to win our immediate objective, but the struggle has bequeathed to us a glorious heritage which has carried the Indian nation tremendously forward on the road to freedom.

26. On the eve of the August revolt, the Forward Bloc offered unqualified co-operation to the Congress High Command; and during the gigantic upheaval the party closed up its ranks and plunged headlong into the struggle, under the banner of the Congress itself as true patriots and revolutionaries. We are proud of the part we played in that grand insurrection, when

"Bliss was it in that Dawn to be alive
But to be young was very Heaven !"

27. The war has closed an epoch, and we in India have entered the new era enriched by the precious legacy of the August revolution and of the *Azad Hind Fauz.* Though the war has ended, yet over vast tracts of the globe there is no peace, but only a precarious truce, further confounded by the grisly terror of the atom bomb. But we are determined to administer the *coup de grace* to a decaying, moribund imperialism, and the armed forces of India are now at one with the civilian population on this vital issue. The surging unrest in the Army, Navy and Air Force bears ample witness to this fact. The immediate future is likely to abound in pitfalls and dangers, but our tread shall be firm and we will not faint nor falter. Our failure in the last battle has been only apparent; out of such a seeming failure we shall forge a resounding victory in the near future. Netaji said in his final broadcast,

"There can be no room for pessimism; we have lost only the first round, but we shall win the war."

The passion for freedom is aglow in all Indian hearts today, and Sardar Patel could thunder soon after his release last year: "Our slogan is no longer 'Quit India', but 'Quit Asia.'" British Imperialism like all other tyrannies is on its last legs, and it is not improbable that it might stage a last-ditch effort before giving up the ghost. That is why we cannot give way to complacency, but must be on the *qui vive.* Our aim should be to transform the Interim Central Government into the *Azad Hind* Government at no distant date. Heirs to the revolutionary tradition of August, of Netaji and his I.N.A., it shall be our sacred duty to strengthen the masses for the final decisive struggle, in the event of the Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly failing to achieve our revolutionary goal. It is a happy augury, indeed, that a militant democrat of the calibre of Pandit Nehru and a veteran anti-Imperialist fighter like Sardar Patel are at the helm of affairs, and we shall work for the expulsion of foreign masters from Indian soil, for the liquidation of all forms of exploitation and for the creation of an equal, class-less and caste-less society. Thus will Netaji's unfulfilled task be accomplished, and thus will the Forward Bloc, strengthening the dynamic militant forces in the Congress, play its glorious part in the post-war revolutionary age. Let us recall the stirring appeal of Netaji :

"In India, we are ringing down the curtain on an age that is passing away, while at the same time, we are ushering in the dawn of a new era. The age of Imperialism is drawing to a close and the era of freedom, democracy and socialism looms ahead of us. India, therefore, stands today at one of the cross-roads of history. It is for us to share, if we so will, the heritage that awaits the world."

28. Life springs from death; even so from the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations. By a heroic endurance in suffernig India has gained the position she holds. Were the prospect of further horrors or further sacrifices to cause her to quail for a moment, all would again be lost. The peace and freedom that will finally end the conflict can only be secured by the stern determination of a close-knit nation steeled to the acceptance of death rather than the abandonment of its rightful liberty.

29. The Immortal Spirit brooding, from years sempiternal, at the heart of Creation, ever urges us forward, ever onward, ever upward! May God endow us with courage and fortitude to plant our feet firmly on the steep path of revolution and to march forward to victory! To dare, again to dare and without end to dare!! Let us all strive for that happy day when a free India will gather the peoples of the world under her spacious banner and preach to them the old, but ever new, gospel of peace and harmony, firmly rooted in a wide spiritual democracy and bathed in the refulgent light of a Himalayan dawn! It shall be the noble task of a free India to lift this machine-driven, money-ridden age to a higher level of social justice and spiritual grandeur. Let it be our proud privilege to usher in the great Asiatic Federation, and as the crown and glory of our labours, let us dare to build the Super-Parliament of Man, the Socialist Federation of one Free World—the vision and the heart's desire of sages, seers and prophets! Then shall Man have Life, and have it more abundantly.

30. Let us have faith in our historic mission. Let us be strong in that faith, and move forward into the future, stout of heart and clear of vision. The spirit of empire must give place to the Empire of the Spirit, before Man can finally break the bonds that bind him, and come into his own, his Divine heritage!

Jai Hind.

October 10, 1946.

A STRAIGHT REVOLUTIONARY

By MUKUNDALAL SARKAR

One evening while I was locked up in my cell in the Madras Penitentiary, and busy reading the evening news, one sentry came running to inform me that some Raja had come as a prisoner. I was the only political prisoner in the yard which was known as "European Yard", and naturally, the sentry broke the news to me alone and that too most cautiously, lest any one else might know it. As is known all over the country, in jails, everything is kept secret, but the beauty is that such secrecy is known to all the inmates of the prison house before it is to be actually known by all. So, the sentry also thought that his information could be revealed first, though within a few minutes it would be known to all. Yet, secret news has its own charm, specially in a prison. Therefore, this piece of news created in me eagerness to know further details of the newcomer, a comrade in jail. Who that Raja might be was the thought in my mind at the moment ? In matters like this the sentries, sepoys, warders indulge in a competition as to who would be the first man to convey such news to proper quarters. So, another man came running to say that a very big person, probably a Bengali, had come and had been waiting in the office at the tower. That set my mind speculating 'who that Raja-like Bengali might be?' Then the warning came from the main gate that the Jailer was coming from the office. Naturally, both the sentries ran away from my place in a few seconds' time, because they were not supposed to enter into my yard. They had come surreptitiously only to inform me of the new arrival. Then the Jailer came and told me that some one had come from the Jubbulpore Central Jail and he seemed to be a very important political leader, and a Bengali. I could at once guess, it was either Sarat or Subhas as both the brothers were then lodged as State-prisoners in that jail. The Jailer came to select the place where the newcomer could be accommodated. He accepted my suggestion to keep him in the verandah (upstairs) just opposite my cell which was on the ground floor. Within a few minutes the paraphernalia including the heavy luggages of new prisoner came in, but not the owner. Then the Jailer ushered in a tall and majestic figure and when I peeped out of my cage-like cell, I was really thrilled to see dear Subhas. Both of them went upstairs, and I wished Subhas Babu in Bengali. He was sur-

prised to know that I was also there. Returning his wishes to me Subhas Babu remarked—"The earth is round—at a certain point all meet." This was at 9 P.M. on the 17th July, 1932.

A small incident had taken place in the office at the time of admission and that detained him there for about an hour. It was this: the Jailor most courteously asked Subhas Babu to follow him to the yard without the luggages and articles that had come with him. Subhas refused to move an inch from the office without his companions—the luggages. The Jailer said it was getting late to go through all the formalities to look into the luggages and make entries thereof, but they would be sent to the yard next morning. On being questioned about the so-called formalities, the Jailer had to admit that there would be a search of all the luggages before they could be allowed to remain with the prisoner. Subhas retorted that he would not allow any one to lay hands on his articles and he would prefer to remain in the office unless the luggages also go with him wherever he might be. This incident was reported to the Superintendent in his bungalow over the telephone, and the Jailer had to yield. Thus Subhas crossed the first hurdle.

It may be recalled that when Gandhiji came back disappointed from the Second Round Table Conference in London, the Congress called it Working Committee to meet at Bombay towards the end of December, 1931. Subhas was also given a special invitation to attend this meeting. As General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress I also summoned the T. U. C. Central Executive Council to meet at Bombay at that time. We all were there and we anticipated another struggle after the failure of the second R. T. C. On the 4th January, 1932, Gandhiji was arrested, and Subhas was arrested the next day when he was travelling by the Calcutta Mail. He was taken down from the train at Kalyan station (G.I.P. Rly.) and sent straight to Seoni jail (C.P.). There his health broke down within a short time. On enquiry from him we could learn that his food was very bad, and in certain quarters there was a suspicion that some kind of mild poison was administered through food and the drinking water. Due to ill health he was transferred to Jubbulpore jail and Sarat Babu was also brought there to keep him company. But the elder brother also began deteriorating in health, and there he first got the disease of diabetes.

The condition of Subhas grew worse and according to the medical recommendation for change of place, he was brought to Madras. There also he could not and did not take any solid food. He was then living on morning tea and the rest of the day on plain water or sometimes mixed with sour lime juice. He lost his weight by 82 lbs. and became a physical wreck.

Despite his ill health, Subhas was as cheerful and energetic as ever. He would not eat but he would *feed* others and for that, he would cook himself. That was his pleasure. His preparations were really excellent. One day he said in all humour that when he would be released he would be able to earn at least Rs. 40|- per month as a cook and thus remove himself from the list of vagabonds. In this connection, I remember, our *Mej-Da* (second elder brother)—Sarat Babu—used to call us in affectionate banter 'vagabonds' and Subhas the Prince of Vagabonds. We enjoyed this joke heartily. That Prince became the supreme head of the Free India Government and idol of 40 crores of Indians.

As a political being, Subhas was the sternest of men, but as a social being, he was the sweetest. It was by close association with him for nearly three months in jail, I came to know that he had a woman's heart, but in dealing with the officials of the bureaucracy he was the stoutest to enforce his will on others. And in that all would have to yield. He drew me so close to him that I gave my service to save such a noble soul who would save India from ignominy and misery. There would be no rest in his political thinking and reading, but he would be indifferent in taking medicine and for keeping health. That made me so miserable that sometimes in my own cell (which was just next to his bed) I used to weep like a child. Sometimes I had to tell him that I would like to eat certain things and with all smile in his face, he would prepare them for me. Intentionally I used to order something which he could also take in that state of health, and when he served me that food I would refuse it unless he would also agree to take that. In this way I could make him eat something when he was free from the stomach-pain and indigestion. That was the case with medicine as well. Whatever medicine would help him, I managed to get through him in my name. Naturally, I used to take it only to induce him also to take. Ultimately he understood my tricks, but yielded to my desires to remove my sadness on account of his health. That was the man.

In matters of politics he knew no rest and he started a Sunday class in which about 125 'Satyagrahi' prisoners in "C" class used to participate. Subhas used to give his talk for an hour in this class every Sunday. Before the boys came to our yard at 10 A.M. he would prepare something for them to eat—be it *halwa* or *khir*; be it *sandesh* or tea and toast. He must give something new every time either in politics or eatables. He did not believe in staleness or repetition. After this hour's healthy talk the boys with their refreshed and inspired mind would be taken back to their own yard. In this class my part was only to see to the perfection of arrange-

ments and discipline in order to bring them nearer to Subhas and his teachings. That was successful and to-day it is proved by the fact that politically Madras is more militant and revolutionary than what it was before 1932. We used to send out through secret agencies manuscripts of political literature for print and distribution.

One evening the Madras newspapers reported that Subhas was writing a book with my assistance, and as a matter of fact, I had to type the manuscript. Of course, I had my portable typewriter with me. Next morning the Superintendent drew Subhas' attention to that piece of news, and Subhas humorously remarked,—"The imagination of the news seems to be incomplete, because it has not been said that the book will be printed in the Government press inside the jail." We all had a hearty laugh over the news.

As a matter of fact, a small book of about 100 pages was written, smuggled out of jail and printed at Coimbatore. The name of the book was "Indian Struggle", on the basis of which he wrote and published a larger volume in Europe under the same name. But the British Government banned it in India. The ban was, however, lifted after Subhas became President of the Haripura Session of the Indian National Congress in 1938.

In observing 'Jatin Das' Day we had a fast for the whole day and held a meeting in the evening, immediately before the lock-up, and the tricolour was flying over the pipul tree whole day and night. The special feature of this Day was that all the criminal convicts also observed fast of their own accord.

One morning, as an official visitor, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Madras, in the ordinary course of his visit to the Penitentiary, went upstairs and enquired of Subhas,—"Are you comfortable?" Subhas at once gave a mild retort by saying,—"Please introduce yourself first." The Magistrate said,—"I am the Chief Presidency Magistrate and an official visitor." Subhas said,—"You should feel ashamed of yourself and of your Government to keep me as prisoner without any charge or trial. Don't you think it is sheer mockery to ask a prisoner if he is comfortable? Why don't you put yourself in this position and then get the answer?" Since then no visitor—official or non-official—met him.

Subhas was the Treasurer of the All-India Trade Union Congress in 1931-32, while I was the General Secretary. The annual session of the T. U. C. was due then and it was held in Madras when we both were in the Madras jail. We kept ourselves in touch with the session

and our resolutions and accounts along with the report which we sent from jail, were accepted by the T. U. C.

Like a student, Subhas was a veritable reader of books and he purchased all up-to-date literature on socialism and communism, specially the literature of Russia. He felt convinced that the Russian Revolution was thoroughly scientific. That turned his mind as to how he could also work for socialism under the given conditions in India. There and then he visualised his future programme of work. At one time Subhas was influenced by Garibaldi, as Surendra Nath Banerjea had been influenced by Mazzini. Then Michael Collin's influence was also there, but subsequently, his mind was influenced by Lenin. He formed his own mind and plan, and as a result, he wanted to establish and maintain his contact with foreign democracies. He used to say often that the Chittagong Armoury Raid opened the eyes of the people to the fact that without possessing arms and ammunitions of their own and in spite of the prevalence of the Arms Act, the people could defeat the brutality and murder committed by the mercenaries of the Government. He always felt restive as to how to deliver India from her bondage and with whom he should make alliance for the final struggle against British rule. Just then de-Valera came into power in Ireland and the literature of the Sinn-Fien movement which brought Irish freedom, turned his attention more to militarism than pacifism. So many times he used to say that dishonesty must be eradicated from politics—in words, thoughts and deeds. He never liked to go against his conscience and faith. He could never reconcile his thought to non-violence in the context of politics as was generally understood and preached by Gandhiji. In his personal dealings, however, with others and humanity at large, he was very soft and he practised rational non-violence, but so far as politics and for that matter dealings with the military power ruling over India were concerned, he was firm in his opinion that it would be impossible for India to be free without the use of the same weapon as was used by Britain to rule over India.

It was at this time that we both used to discuss various matters relating to Indian politics in contrast with those of other countries, and ultimately Subhas decided to keep himself in line with the tide in the rising forces of other countries. On the basis of these thoughts, therefore, he planned his future programme of the Indian revolution. He felt passionately the necessity of forming a Socialist party and in the course of my statement in court in which I was then being tried, I introduced his suggestion of organising the Hindusthan Samyavadi Sangh. And this name and idea was incorporated in his political statement issued from Vienna (Austria).

The mere change of place from Jubbulpore to Madras did not bring the slightest improvement to his health. On the contrary, his case became worse inasmuch as the gall-blader was affected. The Medical Board appointed by the Government of India (because he was detained as a State-prisoner under the orders of the Central Government) came to Madras, examined him and recommended that his life would be in danger if he was kept further in jail; in addition, he should be sent to a place of bracing climate preferably outside India. Dr. B. C. Roy of Calcutta being one of the members of the Board, suggested that Bose should be sent to somewhere within India. This recommendation not being unanimous, the Government decided to send him to Bhawali Sanatorium strictly under police guard there.

Will-power and sustaining capacity always dominated over his physical disability and diseases. He received the medical report with utter indifference, but could not be indifferent to politics which was the very breath of his life. He began seriously again to plan his future work both in India and abroad. Because of the aggressive nature of his revolutionary programme, most of the colleagues of Subhas deserted him either due to fear of the Government or of the official group of the Congress. Another group of his colleagues deserted Subhas for fear of losing their career through politics. The trusted few had been and are still there in the field to follow his ideals and programme. The only few from amongst those who were selected by him in 1932 for his future programme, are still loyal to Subhas in comradeship. It was and still it will be a great pleasure and glory to work with him when he comes back in our midst. He has got a large heart to forgive his opponents and forget the mistakes of his associates, if they reassured sincerely and seriously of their future conduct. He never forgets his friends and colleagues; on the other hand, he gives the best protection to his admirers, followers and comrades. This is borne out by the fact that even when he suddenly disappeared from India in 1941, he wrote several personal letters to those loyal friends and he mentioned again to me the names of several persons in India, so that they might be protected even in his absence.

On the eve of leaving his homeland in January, 1941, when he handed over all the work to me, he did not forget to mention the names of certain persons who and whose families needed pecuniary help and also of those whose domestic affairs and properties would be at stake. That is why we used to call him a master of details. On this occasion we had five hours' talk covering a wide range of national and international matters, having

direct bearing upon the future Indian Revolution and the seizure of power. During this talk no one else was present in the room. It was on the 16th of January, 1941.

Being alarmed of the danger of Subhas' life, I could not keep quiet and with limited resources and opportunities inside the jail, I started agitation for the appointment of a fresh Medical Board to examine him again and report on his health. Subhas left the Madras Penitentiary on 9th October, 1932 for the Bhawali Sanatorium, and within a few days after his transfer I also came out on bail in order to pursue the agitation. Through the press, platform and literature the agitation was carried on unabated specially in two provinces, *viz.*, Madras and Bengal. The brown and blue eyes of cats maintained by the bureaucracy in Madras were ever vigilant over my activities and in order to foil the agitation the police succeeded twice to get my bail-bond cancelled and fresh arrest warrants issued. There was not a single foul means which they left unused to get me arrested, but the cause was so great and just that sincerity and honesty of purpose on my side baffled the tricks on the other side and I was free immediately on both the occasions without going to jail. I could then freely go to Calcutta to see through the thing myself. There I met eminent persons like Sir Nilratan Sarkar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. Sunil Bose, Kumar Debendra Lal Khan and others who took up the matter most sympathetically and seriously. Malaviyaji was so much moved on hearing the bad conditions of Subhas' health that tears rolled down his cheeks and he remarked,—"Subhas has become a physical wreck. He must be saved at any cost and his desires must be fulfilled. The country needs him badly. Don't worry. God is with us." Such is the love the people cherish in their hearts for Subhas. To-day the love for Subhas is greater than ever before. Bengal was simply ablaze in anger when his condition was revealed and specially when the people came to know that it was the note of dissent given by Dr. B. C. Roy against the majority recommendation, which prevented the Government from releasing Subhas and sending him out of India. After finishing my work in Calcutta I went back to Madras to stand my trial which culminated in giving me rest in jail for one year. It was on the 9th January, 1933.

It was a great relief for all of us to learn that the Government of India had appointed another Board to examine and report on his health. This time Dr. B. C. Roy had no place on the Board, and on the basis of this Board's unanimous recommendation Subhas was released on condition that he would proceed straight from the Bahawali Sanatorium to Europe at his own expense,

as the Board said his health would improve only in climates like that of Switzerland in the West. So, Subhas became free again and embarked on the Steamer *Ganges* at Bombay on 23rd February, 1933.

If one recalls the background of this story, he will find that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had been planning a gigantic struggle ever since 1932 and that struggle at the psychological moment of international turmoil will be turned into a regular battle against the Imperialist rule of Britain. Keeping this in view, he made contact with all Indians in Europe and established his relations with most of the diplomats and revolutionaries of the independent countries in Europe, and thus did he evoke their sympathy and enlist support towards the cause of India's independence. Netaji's statesmanship and superb diplomacy succeeded in preparing the ground during his sojourn in Europe during the years 1933-36.

Coming back to India quite hale and hearty, in April, 1936, he found himself arrested again and kept in detention till March, 1937 when he was released. Nothing could daunt his courage and weaken his strength of conviction, and as before, he was determined to fulfil his mission. This year (1937) opened a new leaf of the political history of India, when the National Congress formed popular Ministries in most of the provinces in India. Though under the aegis of British Imperialism, a section of the Congress wanted to fight from within and wreck the Constitution of 1935 under which the popular ministries had been formed in the provinces; whereas Subhas Babu wanted to prepare the country for the second front of war against British rule while the ministerial section would make frontal attack from within the legislatures. Subhas Babu was elected President of the Congress in 1938, but unfortunately, he could not advance his revolutionary programme for the preparation as much as he wanted. The reason was obvious. The parliamentary mentality overtook the Congressmen who were running the imperialist machinery and therefore, even as Congress President, he could not fulfil his ideas by making revolutionary use of the Governmental machine, captured in the majority of the provinces in India. On the other hand, the then Government used repressive measures and passed reactionary legislations against the workers and peasants in whose fighting elements Subhas Babu had to rely for any effective struggle against British Imperialism. Thus the preparation of the country through revolutionary channels, according to his plan, was frustrated. Yet, he knew no rest and fought against all odds within the Congress when he found that the topmost Congressmen had been influenced by parliamentary

activities and had been drifting to mere constitutionalism. By that time the international situation became tense indicating all the probabilities of a gigantic war in which Great Britain would also be involved. This war would create a great opportunity for India to be free, but, finding himself not in agreement with the Working Committee of the Congress, he felt restless all the more, and wanted to revolt against its policy, but he could not for the sake of unity and discipline among themselves. Though he realised his helplessness under the circumstances, he could not, as a born revolutionary, reconcile helplessness with his restlessness. Ultimately, the latter triumphed and he revolted against unity of inaction and stood for the Congress presidentship for the second time in 1939. Despite the rightist section of the Congress and ministerial forces working against his election, he was elected President by a triumphant majority of the combined leftist forces of the country. After the Munich episode war clouds were gathering in the international horizon and Subhas Babu visualised the inevitability of England's difficulty in the then impending war. Now, being equipped with the country's verdict in his favour, he wanted to give a stiff but clean fight to Britain and for the matter of that, according to the fundamental principles and ethics of a duel, he wanted to give a six months' ultimatum to the British Government. Unfortunately, the political banckruptcy and lust for power-politics blinded the rightists not to see the political implication, wisdom and force of this ultimatum. On the contrary, it was ridiculed by them. He, however, pursued his original plan and prepared the country with as many followers as he could gather round him from amongst the revolutionary sections of the country. In the midst of the struggle which he started in April, 1940, he was drafted into prison but escaped from the ugly jaws of British Imperialism in the beginning of 1941.

Crossing the borders of India unnoticed and undetected, he went straight to Germany *via* Russia. There he formed a strong Liberation Army (European Wing) composed of exiled Indians and Indian prisoners of war who had fallen into the hands of Germany and Italy. After a thorough study, theoretical and practical, of modern warfare, he visited all the war fronts of Europe in 1942 and took the supreme command of his army. Adolf Hitler recognised this Army and its Commander-in-Chief as the liberators of India from British rule. Hitler introduced him to his countrymen as the saviour of India and asked them to give greater honour to Bose who, he said, was the Fuhrer of 400 millions of India while himself was the Fuhrer of only 82 millions. His organisation was thorough and perfect

so much so that even after the fall of Germany into the hands of Allied forces, the India Office in London had to say that no trace of any Indian could be found in Germany. Netaji came to the war front in East Asia to lead a gigantic war that was yet to be waged as second front against Britain on the Indo-Burma border for the purpose of penetrating into India to settle accounts with the Britishers who have been exploiting India for more than 200 years.

It may be recalled that the writer who knew Subhas Babu intimately and followed his line of thought and work closely and intelligently, told the country in May, 1941 (four months after his disappearance) that he was in Germany for fulfilling his life's mission, *i.e.*, to secure independence for India. But unfortunately, the people here, including persons holding important positions in political life, were influenced and misled by the British propaganda made against Subhas. The first shot of this kind of scurrilous propaganda was thrown by the Military Secretary to the Government of India on the floor of the Council of State on the 10th November, 1941 to the effect that Subhas Babu had joined the Axis Powers to invade India and he was then in Berlin or Rome. It may be the fear complex or inferiority complex which was responsible for dulling the intellect of our patriots to believe British propaganda more than what a section of our countrymen had said in those days. Even in October, 1942 and January, 1943 a section of Subhas Babu's associates and followers predicted that he was coming as the supreme head of the Free India Government and as Commander-in-Chief of his National Army. When the British Army had to withdraw its forces from the Arakan front in February-March, 1943, it was also predicted in certain quarters in India that the Indian National Army would infiltrate into India crossing the borders of Assam sometime after December, 1943. All these happened, as revealed now, when he appeared in the East. The whole history of it and every detail of his heroic activities is now known to the world. It is a matter of gratification that those who dubbed him as a misguided patriot and a traitor, are now admiring the sterling qualities of the man of India's destiny. Had they appreciated and followed his advice in time, the history of India would have been a different one today. It is hoped that this book will be a great help to the people to guide their future line of action, which Netaji could not finish, and thus fight the final battle of freedom under a correct and dynamic leadership like that of Netaji. The country will not be surprised if and when Netaji comes back to India to command that battle. The people will certainly welcome him—a straight

revolutionary—with all the warmth in their hearts, and in the meantime, prepare the country for the final struggle.

Jai Hind

Subhas Chandra Bose's Order of the Day.

There, there in the distance—beyond that river, beyond those jungles, beyond those hills, lies the promised land, the soil from which we sprang—the land to which we shall now return.

Hark, India is calling, India's metropolis Delhi is calling, three hundred and eighty-eight millions of our Countrymen are calling. Blood is calling to blood.

Get up, we have no time to lose. Take up your arms. There, in front of you is the road that our pioneers have built. We shall march along the road.

We shall carve our way through the enemy's ranks, or if God wills we shall die a Martyr's death.

And in our last-sleep we shall kiss the road that will bring our army to Delhi. The road to Delhi is the road to Freedom.

Chalo Delhi.
Give me blood and I will give you freedom.
Arise ; Youths ; Awake ;

The time has come when youth can no longer sit idle and await instructions from the top. When the leaders fail us in a fight, it is the duty of the rank and file to go ahead and perform the duty. The historical role of youth to function as the vanguard of the movement. It is now for them to come forward, play their historical role and thereby bring about the emancipation of their Motherland.

—*Subhas Chandra Bose*.



National Flag hoisted in front of the Government residence in the Andamans



taji inside the Jail Andamans followed by L to R Mr Shaw (Interpreter) Col Ehsan Qadir and A M Sahay

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE : PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

BY PROF. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI, *Calcutta University.*

Subhas Chandra Bose was junior to me by some six years at college, and some of his intimate friends were my pupils when I became a professor almost immediately after taking my M.A. in 1913. When he was at college in Calcutta, I had occasion to hear something about him shortly afterwards, as I shall narrate below; and I think I saw him for the first time sometime in 1917-1918, possibly at some inter-collegiate function, I forget where. I was impressed by his tall and handsome presence and by his highly intelligent face which with its glasses seemed to reflect uncommon distinction with intellectual seriousness. He came from a distinguished Bengali family which was settled at Cuttack in Orissa. Among his brothers were a well-known doctor and two lawyers, one of whom, Sarat Chandra Bose, is now an all-India personality in politics. A couple of years after I had left college and was settled as an Assistant Professor at the University of Calcutta, a most unfortunate incident occurred (it was early in 1916) at the Presidency College, the premier Government college of Bengal, which was my college as well as Subhas's. It was the assault by a number of students on Professor E. F. Oaten. For Indian college students to combine and give a beating to one of their teachers was an almost unheard-of form of sacrilege; and the fact that the Professor was an Englishman gave a political and a 'seditious' colour to the incident. I myself had the privilege of studying under Professor Oaten in the B.A. class at Presidency College when he first came out to India, I think it was in 1910. He was Professor of History, and our experience of him was that of a rather fine and intellectual type of a young Englishman, who knew his subject well and was eager to know more, and took a great interest in his students and in things Indian. I remember the pleasure and pride I felt when he complimented me highly on an essay on the Rise of Nationalism in Italy in the 19th Century which I wrote as a class-work. He was impressed by the sonorous quality of the Sanskrit language after he had heard a long passage from Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa* which I recited at the Annual Steamer Trip of the students and other members of the Calcutta University Institute which he had gladly joined. Mr. Oaten was a handsome-looking man, well-spoken and highly cultured, and it was expected that he should have a brilliant and a very popular and

useful career in India in front of him. He published a book on *Anglo-Indian Literature* which was a pleasantly written and informative work about the English writers on India and on Indian themes. But unfortunately we were distressed to find that he was not pulling on well with his pupils after a couple of years' stay in India. It was said both by his pupils and by some of his colleagues in the staff of the Presidency College that he was developing the superior, stand-offish attitude of the typical Anglo-Indian *vis-a-vis* the Indians: but I have no personal knowledge of this. He is further said to have expressed himself against Indian nationalistic aspirations in the typical British imperialistic manner, and to have employed language towards his Indian students which a teacher should never have used; and a colleague of his later told me that in the Professors' room in Presidency College he once had an argument with Mr. Oaten—the latter was annoyed at the Indian students not having a sense of realities; they, according to Mr. Oaten (as reported by this gentleman) should admit and accept the simple fact that the British were ruling India because they were morally superior to the Indians, and a frank admission of this position would then do away with a great deal of mutual misunderstanding. Mr. Oaten's colleague told him that, leaving aside the question of the validity or truth of his assertion, he ought to realise that the youth of any country would not like to accept this position of racial or national inferiority, and, to say the least, it would be tactless to argue like that before young students, and particularly by a professor who was an Englishman. But on Mr. Oaten's insisting that it was a palpable matter of social superiority that ought to be generally admitted, his Indian colleague, according to his own statement, retorted: "Mr. Oaten, you may think yourselves to be a superior people, but you should know that in spite of your having ruled us for 150 years, there are hundreds of thousands of our countrymen who would think your touch even to be polluting." During the year that I was his student, such an uncivil attitude was not in the least discernible. It was reported that there were unpleasant bickerings and incidents in the class room; the boys ceased to come to his classes, and that was looked upon as "indiscipline", and the matter culminated when one morning the students waited for their professor and made what was certainly a cowardly combined attack on him, using their fisticuffs. Subhas, it is said, as a leader and organiser of the students had made himself prominent in the college, and he was implicated in the assault. But I personally think he would never stoop to this sort of thing. In any case, the incident and the enquiry which followed created quite a sensation not only in Bengal but

all over India. Subhas and a number of other students were expelled for creating this disturbance, and one of the students, Ananga Mohan Dam, was interned as a political suspect. Subhas returned to Cuttack where he had to keep away from regular college life for a year and a half. During this time he worked with the students at Cuttack, and organized them for social and cultural work. In 1917, his rustication was revoked by the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, the creator of the University of Calcutta as a centre of higher studies and research, and he returned to Calcutta and joined the Scottish Churches College in the third year B.A. class with Honours in Philosophy, taking his B.A. degree in 1919 with a first class.

Subhas had come into some prominence as a result of the Oaten affair. His staunch nationalistic sentiments, however, became well-known in the student community, and he was easily the natural leader. There was always a vein of the mystic and the ascetic in Subhas' temperament. While a lad of fourteen he is said to have made up his mind to become a *Sannyasin* or Hindu medicant monk, and with a friend of a similar trend of mind he wandered about for nearly a year in the ochre of saffron garb of the *Sadhu*, and visited Hardwar, Mathura, Brindaban, Agra, Benares and Gaya. His having remained a bachelor all his life is just a result of this ascetic mentality of his. He had a natural bent towards the parallel of *Yoga* and towards practical mysticism through ritual and prayer.

In September, 1919, I went to Europe, after five years of work as Professor in Calcutta, on an India Government Linguistic Scholarship, and was admitted into the University of London. The same year Subhas was sent by his father to England to prepare for the I.C.S. examination; and he also took his admission into the University of Cambridge. Dilip Kumar Roy and Kshitis Prasad Chattopadhyay, close friends of Subhas, also came to England about the same time. Kshitis was an old pupil of mine, one of my first pupils, and I think it was through him that I had on one or two occasions met Subhas when he came to London. It was generally in the Indian Students' Y.M.C.A. which was then situated, in 1919-1922 when I was in London, at a place called the *Shakespere Hut*, which was a widely scattered single-story establishment in wood, with small cubicles, and hot baths and common halls laid out. This place was in Gower Street, in Bloomsbury, and was close to University College. It was a club and residential quarters for service men back home on leave during World War I, and at the end of the war, it was placed at the disposal of the Indian Y.M.C.A. which started there a hostel and a club for Indian students;

and the place was immensely popular. I had my lodgings elsewhere, in a students' hostel run by the British Y.M.C.A. at 32 Bedford Place, close to the *Shakespere Hut*, where for a long time we (myself and a Tamil student) were the only two Indians living with about 30 British students and about 18 students from different countries of Europe, Africa and America—from France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece (Cyprus), Egypt, South Africa, and the United States. But I was a member of the Indian Y.M.C.A. club also, and was a frequent visitor there, and thus I had an opportunity of meeting other Indian young men who would come to London from Oxford and Cambridge, Manchester and Leeds, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and other places, particularly during vacations. But I cannot say that I could get to know Subhas intimately. Only on one occasion (I think it was in 1920) we corresponded: Subhas wanted to celebrate a reunion of Indian students at Cambridge on the *Vijaya Dasami* day, the last day of the *Durga Puja*. This *Vijaya Dasami* is observed all over Hindu India. Subhas wanted to know the exact English date on which this festival was falling that year, and he wrote to me as he knew that I had with me a Hindu almanac (*Panjika* or *Panchang*) in Bengali. I gave him the information, and that was all.

In 1921, after taking my D. Lit. degree from the University of London, I got my scholarship extended for one year more, and went to the University of Paris, and then I lost all touch with Subhas and his friends. Subsequently after returning home to India in November 1922, I heard that Subhas was successful in the I.C.S. examination in 1920, only eight months after his arrival in England, and was selected as a probationer. But as he had no mind to take up service—even the 'heaven-born service' of the Indian Civilian! He had resigned shortly after his selection. But he stayed on at Cambridge and took his B.A. with Honours in Philosophy in 1921, and returned to India soon after. He was made Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation of Calcutta, and under the first Nationalist Mayor of Calcutta, the late Mr. Chitta Ranjan Das, Subhas quietly came into prominence, his having abandoned the Civil Service (the examination for which he took and passed, it is said, only to demonstrate before those who made a fetish of this service that he thought very little of it himself) making him immensely popular with the people.

Subhas now became a leading figure in Indian politics, and he was soon known to be an ardent soldier of India's struggle for freedom. His career after his return is now part of recent Indian history. Like a great many other countrymen of his, I was watching this career, generally with

warm appreciation, and at times with a certain amount of misgiving or misunderstanding. Not being in the midst of it, politics did not have much charm for me, and I did not preoccupy myself with the various currents and cross-currents of our Indian politics in which Subhas was a force, although in a general way our nationalistic fight for Freedom and the marshalling of all the anti-national forces against British Imperialism was watched by me. I saw Subhas in Calcutta many times, naturally enough, but it was always from a distance.

It was in 1935 that I had occasion to come in personal touch with Subhas once again, and then it happened again in Europe. Subhas was keeping bad health, and he had to go to Vienna, I think for the second time, for treatment and for an operation, possibly early in 1935. Austria was still an independent state, and although Naziism was making considerable headway there, particularly among the young generation, it was still free from the things which were making the name of Nazi Germany looked upon with misgiving all over the world. Jewish doctors were still allowed to exercise their world-renowned skill, and patients suffering from all types of serious ailments were coming to Vienna from different countries of the world for treatment, India sending a good number every year. Subhas, as a preliminary to being operated upon in a nursing home, was staying in Vienna. But he was not idle—he was taking part in various activities, with the support of a number of Indian residents, mainly students in Vienna. Prior to this, Subhas had made trips into the interior of Germany, and he was more or less familiar with the conditions of Central Europe and its politics; and he had also learned German well enough to be able to converse in it freely, though he could not give *ex tempore* speeches in it, as far as I could see. During his stay in Vienna, Subhas met the prominent Viennese scholars and intellectuals, and occasionally he would write letters to the Bengali press in Calcutta (*e.g.* the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*) giving to his own people bits of his experiences. In one such letter he mentioned an interview he had with Professor Heine-Geldern, well-known anthropologist, who spoke to him in appreciative terms of some of my articles on the non-Aryan bases of Indian civilisation. This naturally made me all the more interested in Professor Heine-Geldern and other Viennese scholars and their scholarship. An opportunity presented itself during the middle of May 1935 to enable me to go to Europe a second time. The Second International Congress of Phonetic Sciences was being held in London in July 1935, and as I was selected to act as chairman over the Indian Section of the Congress, my University gave me a subvention (at

the suggestion of my former teacher Professor Daniel Jones of London, President-elect of the Congress) for my travelling expenses. I left India during the fourth week of May and made a tour of Austria, Hungary (Buda-Pest), Czechoslovakia (Prague), Germany and Belgium before arriving at London on the 16th of July 1935. I was in Vienna for 11 days from the 4th of July to the morning of the 13th, when I took the steamer journey down the Danube from Vienna to Buda-Pest. During these 11 days, I met Subhas in Vienna several times, and had long and intimate talks with him on various matters of national and cultural interest.

Prior to leaving India, while travelling from Calcutta to Bombay for my steamer, I had the privilege of meeting Mahatma Gandhi in our train. He joined us at Wardha on his way to Bombay, and I thought it was too good an opportunity to miss seeing him. I was privileged to come into personal touch with Mahatmaji on two occasions previously, in Calcutta—once, when he visited the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishad,* when as a member of the governing body who spoke a little Hindi I was of the party which took him round that institution; and again at the residence of the late Mr. Sudhir Roy and Mrs. Aparna Roy (the daughter of the late Desabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das) when Gandhiji came there to listen to Bengali *Kirttan* music and songs, and on that occasion I was requested to write out in Devanagari characters for Gandhiji's use the text of the Bengali *Kirttans* with a Hindi translation opposite and a Hindi essay on the Bengali *Kirttan*. On my way to Europe I was carrying with me copies of a booklet by myself on "A Roman Alphabet for India." As an advocate of the adoption of the Roman script for all the languages of India, I wanted particularly to meet Mahatmaji and place my views before him, and I thought it was a good opportunity to see him in the train. I managed to get into the third class compartment in which Mahatma Gandhi (with the late Mrs. Gandhi) and his party were travelling. I introduced myself, and handed over copies of my pamphlet to Mahatmaji and to his private secretary the late Mr. Mahadev Desai; and on Mahatmaji's enquiring about it, I told him of the purpose for which I was going to Europe. When Gandhiji heard that I intended to visit Vienna also, he told me that if I met Subhas there, I was to tell him that Mahatmaji had already replied to his letters, and I was to tell him also, as a special message from Mahatmaji, that he must get well quick—it wouldn't do to remain an invalid so long. Mahatmaji took a good deal of affectionate interest in Subhas, and it was indeed quite pleasing to find him in this anxious frame of mind for Subhas' health.

On reaching Vienna I took a room in a hotel in Schotten Ring in the

heart of the city which was the headquarters of the Indian Central European Association, and also of the Chinese Students in Austria. The late Mrs. Kamala Nehru, wife of Pandit Jawaharlal, was travelling with us in our steamer, accompanied by Dr. Atal. She was coming to Central Europe for treatment for her illness which ultimately proved fatal. Indian students in Vienna got information that Mrs. Nehru was coming to Vienna by our train on the morning of the 4th July, and so they mustered strong at the station to receive her. We took advantage of their presence, and Dr. P. N. Katyar from the U.P., who was the secretary of the Hindusthan Association, together with Mr. Amiya Sarkar, nephew of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who were at the station with the others, helped us to go to Hotel de France and take rooms there.

I could see that Subhas's was a name to conjure with among the Indians in Vienna. Subhas was just out of hospital and was still convalescing, and yet he was very much on the move. He was treated with great deference by all cultured people and men of position in Vienna who had any remote connection with or interest in India and the East; and he was also held in esteem by important members of the Austrian government. I was enabled to contact him within a couple of days after my arrival. He invited me and I think two other friends also, to lunch with him in the pension where he was putting up. There I found he was fluent enough in his German. I noticed that in the food he ordered he was not at all an orthodox Hindu who rigidly followed all their food taboos. In the meanwhile, I had made the acquaintance of Professor Baron Heine-Geldern—I had rung him up, and was very kindly asked to tea at his place, and after that Professor Heine-Geldern took me to a meeting of anthropologists where a German scholar gave a lantern lecture on the domestic animals of Mohen-jo-Daro. Two young Austrian scholars, who wanted to go to India to study the Nagas in Assam, were among those who attended, and I was glad to meet them. Subhas and I talked about the scientific and anthropological work in our country. The religious and cultural situation in Nazi Germany as a result of both a national Germanic revival and a growing anti-Semitism was also discussed. I had read a little about a definite swing in the mind of educated Germans towards a revival of the old heathen or pre-Christian Germanic spirit. They were not feeling happy with Christianity as a religion with a Judaistic basis. The mildness and humility that underlay a good deal of the teachings of Christ were not in accord with the aggressive Nazi spirit, and some German thought-leaders were casting about for a new ideology and a new philosophy for a truly Germanic nation. Dr. Wilhelm Hauer, Professor of Sanskrit

at Tuebingen University, was a leader in the direction of evolving a *Deutsches Glauben* or a *German Faith* or *Religion;* and this German Faith Movement was (as I had heard) gaining ground among the Germans with the rising tide of German racialism. I had also heard that Dr. Hauer as a Sanskritist who knew the *Gita* and thought that the Philosophy of Action in a disinterested spirit (*nishkama karma*) was most suited for the German temperament; and in his directing the tone of the German Faith Movement, this *Gita* idea, as an old Aryan idea, was being given prominence. I asked Subhas if he knew anything of this state of affairs in Germany. Subhas was interested in all that he heard from me, and he thought he would look closely into the matter, and would welcome it as a line of cultural and ideological *rapprochement* between Germany and India. I also broached to Subhas my idea of adopting the Roman script for all the languages of India, and thus furnishing a Pan-Indian bond of union through the script, apart from the special merits of the Roman system of writing. Subhas was interested, and asked me to send him a copy of my pamphlet on this subject. This I did, and Subhas, I think, read my pamphlet carefully; and one evening, till late at night, he and I had a long talk on this matter in a café in Vienna, and I think I was able to convince him of the value of the Roman script. Subhas was, as the subsequent great events in his career abundantly proved it, a man of prompt action. The adoption of the Roman script by Turkey had also impressed upon him the importance of it in the modern world. When he was convinced of the great *rôle* the Roman script could play in uniting India and at the same time in linking it with the world outside, he made a timely appeal for a dispassionate consideration of the question of the Roman script from a nationalistic point of view in his Presidential Address before the 51st session of the Indian National Congress at Haripura in February 1938. What he said there was this:

"To promote national unity we shall have to develop our *Lingua Franca* and a common script.............................So far as our *Lingua Franca* is concerned, I am inclined to think that the distinction between Hindi and Urdu is an artificial one. The most natural *Lingua Franca* would be a mixture of the two, such as is spoken in daily life in large portions of the country; and this common language may be written in either of the two scripts, Nagari or Urdu. I am aware that there are people in India who strongly favour either of the two scripts to the exclusion of the other. Our policy, however, should not be one of the exclusion. We should allow the fullest latitude to use either script. At the same time, I am inclined to think that the ultimate solution would be the adoption of a

script that would bring us into line with the rest of the world. Perhaps, some of our countrymen will gape with horror when they hear of the adoption of the Roman script, but I would beg them to consider this problem from the scientific and historical point of view. If we do that, we shall realise at once that there is nothing sacrosanct in a script. The Nagari script, as we know it today, has passed through several phases of evolution. Besides, most of the major provinces in India have their own scripts, and there is the Urdu script which is used largely by the Urdu-speaking public in India and by both Muslims and Hindus in provinces like the Panjab and Sindh. In view of such diversity, the choice of a uniform script for the whole of India should be made in a thoroughly scientific and impartial spirit, free from bias of every kind. I confess that there was a time when I felt that it would be anti-national to adopt a foreign script. But my visit to Turkey in 1934 was responsible for converting me. I then realised for the first time what a great advantage it was to have the same script as the rest of the world. So far as our masses are concerned, since more than 90 per cent are illiterate and are not familiar with any script, it will not matter for them which script we introduce when they are educated. The Roman script will, moreover, facilitate their learning a European language. I am quite aware how unpopular the immediate adoption of the Roman script would be in our country. Nevertheless, I would beg my countrymen to consider what would be the wisest solution in the long run."

Subhas was misunderstood by a great many of our patriots when he proposed the Roman script as the National Script of India in place of the Devanagari, which is favoured and supported by the largest number of Indians. I do not dilate upon this point, as a professed supporter of the Roman script for Indian languages. But I think this support of the Roman script, knowing fully well the strength and extent of Indian popular sentiment against the foreign alphabet (which was, moreover, the alphabet of the people from whose control of Indian affairs we were struggling to set ourselves free) demonstrates some noteworthy traits in Subhas's character—his openness to ideas, his prompt advocacy of what he thought was right, and his solicitude for the unity and welfare of his people.

During my brief stay in Vienna, a meeting was arranged by the Indian Central European Association, one of the ordinary meetings which used to be held to inform interested people in Vienna on Indian affairs and Indian civilisation. It appeared that a number of prominent Austrian merchants as well as officials had become members of the Association. These gentlemen were mainly interested in Indo-Austrian trade—export of Austrian

manufactured goods to India, and of Indian raw goods to Austria. The Association, composed as it was mainly of students and tourists from India, was not naturally always in a position to advance business for mutual benefit; and judging from what Indian merchants doing business in Paris had told me, Indo-Austrian trade had largely to move by a round-about way, through England. But the students resident in Vienna did their bit by giving talks under the auspices of the Association on Indian religion, Indian art and Indian literature, Indian history and economics and other matters. The German race was one of a Brahmanical mind, as we would say in Indian parlance; they were eager to know and learn—and consequently there was no lack of an audience, big or small, to listen to the lectures arranged by the Association. A number of University Professors, specially those who had anything to do with Sanskrit and with the history of our civilisation in general, had also joined the Association. The meeting which took place during my stay and to which I was very kindly invited was attended by some 40 to 50 Indians. I was surprised to find so many of my countrymen in Vienna. They were not all of them students: there were some senior men, travellers, like myself, and some were staying in Vienna for treatment. A good many Austrians also were there. Subhas was there as the Chief Guest of the evening. There was no special subject for a talk on that day: mutual co-operation in trade and cultural matters between Austria and India would be of help to both the countries—this was the topic on which a number of speakers lectured, both Indian and Austrian. Most of the speeches were in German, one or two in English. Subhas gave his talk in English—it was nothing special, but as usual it was suffused with his great love for his motherland. A German translation of his speech was ready, it was then read out.

Subhas heard from me that I had with me about a hundred lantern slides on Indian Art which I had brought with me to Europe with the idea of giving talks on the History of Art in India and on the rise of the Indian National School of Painting at the commencement of this century. He forthwith arranged a lecture on this subject by myself under the auspices of the Indian Central European Association, and he himself presided over it. The lecture was advertised in the local papers, and quite a number of German men and women came, along with some Indians, both men and women. Most of the members of the Austrian part of the audience were professors and teachers, and artists and art-students. My speech was in English, but the slides were there. It struck me that the Germans were very eager for information, and most of the audience stood through the lecture

from 8-30 to 10 o'clock on a very hot summer evening. I wanted to appear before my audience in a cool lounge suit; but Subhas proved to be a great stickler for appearances and formality. The lecture was to be held in a hall of the Hotel de France where I was putting up. Shortly before time, Subhas came up to my room, and insisted upon my putting on my black *sherwani* or tunic of warm Cashmere cloth with a cap shaped like the Gandhi cap to match, and my white Indian trousers tight-fitting below knee. It was a very uncomfortable dress to lecture in for two hours and a half on that hot and sultry evening, in a crowded hall, and the people of Central Europe know nothing of Indian *punkhas* or electric fans. But I had to concede to Subhas's sartorial dictatorship; and he was in a way right, for I was speaking on an important expression of Indian culture, and it was in the fitness of things that I should be dressed *a l' indienne.* I also remembered Subhas's own gorgeous uniform as the G.O.C. ("General Officer Commanding") of the Congress Volunteers on the occasion of session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1928.

The lecture appeared to be successful. The audience stuck to the last, and at the end of it indulged in asking questions, although the speaker was stewing in the heat and was bathed in perspiration. In the very convenient German way, the audience had grouped themselves in friendly batches of four or six round small tables in the hall, and everybody was fortifying himself or herself with drinks hot or cold all the time—beer or coffee or soft beverages—and everybody paid for what he or she took; a very sensible arrangement, which makes it worth their while for hotel or restaurant keepers to keep a lecture hall. Subhas presided over this function, and he introduced me to the audience.

One evening it was rather late when I had returned to my hotel after a day-long trip in one of the park-like woods near Vienna, taking my return train back from a little suburban village-place called Moedling, as far as I remember. I was having a wash and was ready for a square meal as I was feeling very hungry, when Subhas appeared and asked me to come with him forthwith to the residence of an Austrian gentleman of the name of Fetter. He could not wait for me to take a bite—it was an after-dinner *soirée* at the place of his friend, and he had promised to him to take me to them. The implication of an "after-dinner" party was not very inspiring to a man who was very hungry, but I resigned myself to my fate, and accompanied Subhas, hoping to profit by a new experience even at the cost of a gnawing stomach. Herr Fetter was in the Austrian Cabinet, or Government service, with an important portfolio or a responsible post, but at that time

he had retired from all connection with the administration. He and his wife received us. Both of them were highly cultured people, well-informed on all matters of human interest, and both of them had great respect for India and her culture. There were several other people, both ladies and gentlemen. In this "after-dinner" *soirée*, there was quite a lavish arrangement for the inner man; we settled ourselves round a table loaded with all sorts of good things, like cool orangeade and lime juice and other soft drinks, plenty of rapsberries, cherries, pears and other fruits, and sandwiches and delicious cakes. Our talk continued in the intervals of eating, or *vice versa*. Yet I must say that on that evening I observed what would certainly be described as an admirable restraint in the matter of eating; it was an ordeal for an almost famishing man to behave like having come there after a good dinner, and in front of such a good spread too. But it would not do to try to make up for my lost dinner in such select company. I followed the lead of the others in my procedure, and I found I was quite correct—despite the sufferings of the hidden Tantalus within. We talked about the trends of present-day civilisation, about the strength and the beauty of certain old-world ideologies, about the crisis in faith and religion in the present world, about the relation between science and religion, about the ideals behind the civilisation of India and how far India can be said to have a message for the modern man; about literature in general; about Rabindranath, with whose works, in both English and German translations, everybody appeared to have a good acquaintance; about Mahatma Gandhi and what he really stood for; about the literature and art of China; and similar matters of intellectual and cultural content. It was a very pleasant and stimulating experience indeed, and for two and a half to three hours, we kept up our conversation and exchange of ideas. It was mostly in English, so that the two Indian guests might not be inconvenienced. This meeting with the Fetters, thanks to Subhas's kindness, will always remain a very pleasant memory for me.

It was I think close upon 1 o'clock when we left for home, and then I insisted that Subhas had a cup of coffee with me while I tried to get a bite in some wayside restaurant. These were about to close, but we found a place where a sympathetic waiter got for me an omelette and some cold meat and bread, and some delicious hot coffee for both of us. I had then another close conversation with Subhas—on the cultural outlook for India, on the chances of Indian freedom (Subhas was sure that there would be another war in five years and then we must create an opportunity for ourselves out of international jealousies when Western powers would become too ex-

hausted and too disunited), and, above all, on the question of the Romanisation of the Indian languages. It was perhaps nearing 2 o'clock in the morning when we parted at a street crossing, he to go to his pension and I to my hotel in Schotten Ring.

I left Vienna by steamer down the Danube for Buda-Pest on the morning of the 13th June 1935. It was a 12-hour journey, and quite an unforgettable experience. Arriving at Buda-Pest I found my hotel, and after the hot and tiring day on the river, I was getting ready to go to bed, when I received a visitor. It was Mr. Ferenc Zayti, well-known artist, antiquarian and traveller of Hungary, to whom Subhas had written that I was coming to Buda-Pest, and I should be done the honours of the place by him as far as it lay in his power. Mr. Zayti was a magnificent bearded giant of a man, whose notions of history and anthropology were rather imaginative than scientific; but he had made a wide tour of India, and like another great countryman of his, Sandor Csoma Korosi (who, in his search for the ancestral home of his people, the Magyars or Hungarians, came to India over a hundred years ago, then went to Tibet and learned Tibetan, and became the founder of scientific Tibetan studies), Mr. Zayti's objective was to find Hungarian origins in India. He was convinced that he had found them among some of the primitive pre-Aryan peoples of Rajputana, and he was quite happy with his discovery. But he had an artist's love of the picturesque in Indian life, and had painted a whole series of pictures in oils of life in Rajputana and of Indian legends; and besides had made a fine collection of Indian textiles and art objects which he kept in his flat in Buda-Pest; and above all, he entertained brotherly feelings for all Indians. Subhas's kindness and forethought in writing to Zayti before I had left Vienna helped me to obtain very good friends in Buda-Pest. Mr. Zayti took me under his protection, and introduced me to a number of other people. There was my old friend Professor Gyula (Julius) Germanus the Turcologist and Islamist, who was at Rabindranath's University of Visva-bharati at Santiniketan for a year as Nizam Professor of Islamic Culture; and I made the acquaintance of Dr. Zoltan Takacs, in charge of the local Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Art, and of Dr. Istvan Medgyaszay, a distinguished architect of Vienna, who had been also to India, and who arranged for a lecture by myself on Indian Art in the Hungarian Union of Engineers and Architects. My visit of six days to Buda-Pest was thus made rich in personal associations through Subhas's kindness and his friendly offices in introducing me to some notable people there.

Subhas is no more, he is now gathered to the Hall of Heroes. He achieved the seemingly impossible thing for us—he turned lifeless and brainless automata into living and thinking men. The personnel of the Indian Army, magnificent fighters, but unthinking pawns in the Englishman's game of imperialism, were made by him to feel for the first time in a hundred and fifty years that they too were men, and had their duty to their people and country—their destiny was not to remain for ever the slaves of the British *Sarkar*. Subhas also achieved another great thing—he demonstrated that Hindu-Muslim communalism is an artificial creation, an incubus which had its birth in the witches' cauldron of the colonial policy of a Satanic foreign government—Satanic in the sense that it was maintaining itself by sedulously fostering, and frequently creating, seemingly unbridgeable mistrust and its corollary fratricidal conflict among sections of the same people—same in blood and in language, in culture and in history, in life and in mind, only different in some of the outer paraphernalia of formal religion. He made the Hindu and the Muslim, the Sikh and the Christian, and the native Indian and the Anglo-Indian, feel as brothers, as one Indian people, single and indivisible. Our knowledge of all this achievement of his came to us in that great blessing for India, the trial of the Officers of the Indian National Army, Subhas's deathless creation, in the Red Fort of Delhi. He gave to India her first *Azad Hind Raj*, a "Free Indian State", and with it her great national salutation *Jai Hind* "Glory to India", side by side with Bankim Chandra's gift *Vande Mataram* "I salute Thee Mother." For all that he has achieved, his name and fame will be a beacon light for all Indians, irrespective of caste, creed or colour; and he will be a pattern and exemplar for all lovers of their country and people, who want to see them free. To have known such a man is a great honour; and to have come in touch with him, even in a perfunctory manner, is certainly a great good fortune. And it is in a spirit of thankfulness for this good fortune that I have sought to give a record of my very brief yet not very distant contact with one, who, for the spirituality of his outlook, the depth of this love for his motherland and the greatness of his achievement, can without travesty be hailed as a *Patriot Saint of India.*

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

By T. L. VASWANI

Subhas Chandra Bose appeared on the scene at a time when India was disturbed by a deep unrest: hidden underneath was the Fire of Revolution.

Subhas was the leader of a minority but it was a revolutionary minority. Not till he moved out of India, did he succeed in building up a *fighting* minority and , in due course, organised it like a detachment of storm troopers. In this he has reminded me, again and again, of Lenin. Like Lenin, too, Subhas was a ruthless propagandist, and he turned the people's unrest against the Constitutional Movement in India.

He joined hands with Japan: but he never betrayed India to Japan: he never subordinated India to Japan's imperial interests: he was against all imperialism: he was a fearless champion of India's Freedom. And he wanted, as Lenin wanted, not a bourgeois revolution but a People's Revolution. Like Lenin, too, he came to believe that freedom could not come through a "Constituent Assembly". Subhas realised that a "New Constitution" looking for a model to Switzerland or Britain or America or Russia and for blessings to British Parliament would necessarily be an imported thing based on Western materialism.

Years ago, he visited Karachi: I sent him my garland of homage and love: and I greeted him as, in mental and spiritual stature, superior to many of his political contemporaries in East or West. He believed that India must "fight her modern enemies with modern methods", but he never became a disciple of the West. He believed in the genius and mission of India: he realised that the immortal destiny of India was rooted in her mighty past. In one of his speeches he said: "We must take our stand on our past. India has a culture of her own which she must continue to develop along her own distinctive channels. In philosophy, literature, art and science, we have something new to give to the world which the world eagerly awaits. In a word, we must arrive at a synthesis." Subhas' militant nationalism was inspired by an idealism which was filled with love of India's *Rishis* and Indian ideals.

Subhas' heroic sacrifice moved not a few to a life of dedication to the service of India: some Indian merchants in Burma, indeed, became as

fakirs surrendering wealth for the cause of freedom: and his "Indian National Army" brought together many Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims to work for India's emancipation. Subhas showed how Hindus and Muslims could unite in the field of *action.*

Who is a hero? He who answers the call of honour, not expediency, and maintains the integrity of his soul in conflict with tremendous forces. A hero may not achieve "success" but he remains true, noble, firm in the inter-play between Fate and Ideals. He battles with circumstances: he does not surrender. Herein is the secret of the hero's character. Such a hero is Netaji Subhas!

I know not why, but around me I hear again and again, a great noise: is it the noise of a crumbling world, the noise of a "chaos", a "revolution" to be? And as though from the very centre of the "noise" a voice is calling: "Here ye children of the Sages of the East ! India is re-arising, radiant with light and aflame with freedom, to give her great message to the Nations!" And in this New Day that is dawning, Subhas will, I believe, be greeted by millions of men and women as, indeed, a Patriot and a Prophet of Resistance and Revolution!

Remember—Subhas said:

1. Forget not that the greatest crime for a man is to remain a slave.
2. Forget not that the greatest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong.
3. Remember the eternal law—
   You must give life, if you want to get it
4. Remember that the highest virtue is to battle against inequity, no matter what the cost may be.

* * * *

Atomic Bombs of Subhas Bose.

1. His escape from India.
2. His flight to Berlin and Tokyo.
3. His formation of I.N.A.

Will his 4th bomb be his reappearance? India refuses to believe that Subhas is dead.

"I must die so that India May live."

—*Subhas Chandra Bose*

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

By RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI

I first came in contact with Subhas Bose in 1923 at Delhi when the Congress was divided into two groups over the question of what was known as 'Council Entry.' Mahatma Gandhi was in jail and the leaders outside were not able to come to an agreement. Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, Pundit Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Vithalbhai Patel led one section which advocated a change in the tactics and entrance to the legislature. And the other led by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Ansari and Sardar Patel stood for the old policy. Subhas Babu, as the favourite lieutenant of Deshabandhu, was playing a prominent part in the controversy. He was a young enthusiast who had one overpowering aim—liberation of the country from foreign yoke. And that aim was the only motive that guided all his steps.

We who were young at that time and had joined the struggle either after giving up our college studies or after just completing it looked to him for inspiration and guidance. And usually the young were impatient of the cautious and calculated steps of our leaders and looked up to him to influence the leaders to our view.

Deshabandhu's attachment to him was surprising and often through him he was able to influence the decision of the Party.

At the time of Das Babu's death, Subhas Babu was in jail and the leadership of Bengal was assumed by Mr. Sen-Gupta who succeeded Deshabandhu as President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, Leader of the Swaraj Party in the Bengal Legislative Council and as Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation. Young men who were very much attached to Subhas Babu did not approve the choice, but had no alternative as their leader and idol was in jail. But as soon as he came out they clamoured for his installation in place of his *Guru*. And they succeeded. Subhas Babu was elected Mayor and President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

Subhas Babu's influence was not confined to Bengal. Young men all over the country were inspired by his earnestness and by his sacrifices. And soon he came to occupy a unique position in the Congress organisation.

Subhas Babu's politics did not appeal to orthodox Congressmen. They were under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi's ethical code and looked with

abhorrence on anything deviating from the code of conduct laid down by him.

Subhas Babu was not bound by any ethical code. He stuck to his aim and anything that came in its way he discarded.

The politics of the orthodox Congressmen and Subhas Babu was bound to come in conflict and it came into conflict soon.

Subhas Babu's adventures in new lines soon gathered around him and behind him a large collaborators and followers and a day came when he increased his own strength and came out victorious as President of the Tripura Session of the Congress.

Subhas Babu realised that the method adopted in 1920 for driving out the alien rulers had become stale and ineffective. New tactics were needed. And he boldly adopted them.

The Tripura Session of the Congress brought a definite break between him and the old guard. The old guard was strong enough to drive him out of the Congress and to crush him.

This severance of connection from the Congress was a blow to him, but it also freed him from the restrictions that the great organisation imposed on its members. He was free to work on his own lines and although in the short time that he had had after his break from the Congress and before he left the country, he was not able to build up a strong organisation in the country, he had won sufficient young adherents to make his voice in the politics of the country effective and to influence indirectly the decision of the Congress.

Subhas Babu's flight from the country, his journey to Germany and back to Japan, and his leadership of the Indian National Army have captured the imagination of the masses of the country. Today he is a national hero. Everyone points to him and his activities with emotion and pride.

The devotion of the I.N.A. both collectively and individually, to their Netaji is inspiring. I have seen many of them—both officers and soldiers—weep at the very mention of his name.

No one can say with definiteness whether he is alive or dead today. If he is alive and ever returns to the country, he will receive a welcome no one in the country has received so far. And people will expect him to take up their leadership to guide them to peace and prosperity.

Lucknow, January 13, 1947.

SUBHAS THE IMMORTAL

By Dr. PATTABHI SEETARAMAYA

Today's politics is tomorrow's history. That is but a truism. But events happen in life which being the politics of the day, constitute the history of the day as well. Such is the flight of Subhas Babu beyond the borders of India across the fastnesses of Kabul to unknown regions for achieving unsuspected purposes. Whosoever thought that this silent sphinx of the Congress who stood mute and voiceless for a year of his tenure of office, would suddenly develop into a strategist, a warrior, a commander of forces, a rebel, and revolutionary in other than the softer meanings of the terms, and at last a mystery man whose whereabouts are unknown, who nevertheless is today adored as the hero in hiding and was yesterday worshipped as the martyr that was no more.

Greatness never advertises itself until it inevitably comes into the limelight of its own self-luminosity. Reflected light cannot be independent. They are planetary in character but the innate, self-born brightness of the stars emit their scintillations in their own time and lit the skies and the earth even from those astronomical distances which are not easily conceivable. Even so did Subhas Babu shine from afar like a radiant orb in the bluc firmament. Alike from far-off Berlin in the West and from distant Tokyo in the East, Subhas Babu broadcast his thoughts and sentiments and unfolded on the wireless his plans and campaigns week in and week out to an amazed and astounded world that now believed them all and was thrown into raptures of hope and joy, and now disbelieved and was lost in doubt and despair.

Subhas was still a phantom and his name was still a sound when the Indian Armies under his leadership and command invaded Imphal and the eastern boundary of Manipur. Japan was in every one's thoughts. And when the Japanese were threatening to invade Balasore and the armies on boundary marched towards Jamshedpur, it was Japan that was believed to be the mainspring and fountain-head of the mighty resources which were overwhelming the country.

But time solved all problems and riddles and resolved all doubts and difficutlies. The return of the I.N.A., the sensational trials that it led to, the wide advertisement that followed in their train, brought to light

the hidden facts of this great adventure in modern history and revealed the real man in the mystic, the brave soldier in the civilian, the genuine revolutionary in the administrator. That Subhas's colleagues did not share his principles and policies could not detract for the glory of his adventure. No foreigner may be trusted to emancipate one subject country except to enslave it himself in turn. Yet the fact remained that the attempt unprecedented in character, colossal in magnitude and stupendous in achievement must be assessed at its innate worth without being discounted either by the rights and wrongs of the case or by the facts of its success or failure. The endeavour was an end in itself, apart from its *potential* (since become *kinetic*) value in disillusioning a nation in regard to its own enviable importance.

A new faith and fervour, yea a new philosophy has been generated in millions of dried-up and despairing hearts much as the showers of the monsoon would cover a fallow land with patches of green verdure. Subhas has proved to the world that Hindustan is still a land of valour and prowess, that the Indian has still in him that sense of national honour for the preservation and perpetuation of which his forefathers had shed their red blood. Subhas may be alive or dead in body, but his spirit and his name will endure long, yea for ever in history, in common with the names of Alexander and Darius, of Caesar and Hannibal, of Czenkhis Khan and Temur Lane, of Harold the last of the Barons and William the Conqueror, of Cromwell and Guy Fawkes, of Kaiser and Hitler.

"My perfect comradeship with Subhas Chandra Bose throughout the common tasks and perils of the war years and the fruit it bore in bringing out two peoples together as never before and also in widening Asiatic relations will remain with me as a memory that nothing can destroy."

Dr. Ba Maw



Netaji addressing a public meeting in Andamans, 31st December, 1943



Netaji coming out of the Cellular Jails in the Andamans with the Japanese Rear Admiral and Azad Hind Government officials

ESCAPE OF NETAJI FROM INDIA TO GERMANY

BY UTTAM CHAND

I deem it fair to state at the very beginning that prior to my meeting with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Kabul in 1941, I had had no contact with him, and my meeting with him in Kabul was like a windfall. In the month of February 1941 I was sitting at my shop turning over newspapers. Icy cold wind was blowing. Snow was falling and the whole countryside—the roads and the houses—presented a dazzling white colour. Bitter cold had brought about a sense of ennui. But my pensive mood was disturbed by a stranger dressed in a Khaki Peshawar Salwar, a Khaki shirt, a leather 'jerkin' and leather waistcoat. The stranger had a turban of the Pathan type. He was in a dress of a perfect border-tribesman. The stranger entered my shop and looking around accosted me in a low tone, "Is your name Uttam Chand?" The stranger only softly smiled when I told him that that was so. I requested the stranger to tell me what I could do for him, but the presence of a fifteen-year-old boy named Amar Nath who was working in my shop made him suspicious. I could read his mind. So I sent Amar Nath away to bring tea for us. The stranger then opened his heart and said, "My name is Bhagat Ram. I belong to Ghalla Dher in the Mardan district. My brother attempted to shoot the Punjab Governor." My aunt belongs to that village and everybody in that village knew that my uncle had a shop in Kabul.

"What can I do for you then?"

"I am on a mission. I have brought Subhas Chandra Bose here to smuggle him across the Russian border," said Bhagat Ram, the stranger. The very name of Subhas Babu made my heart jump up and I felt as if I was in a trance. Bhagat Ram continued, "We are staying at present in a *Serai* but an Afghan C.I.D. man has been pestering us. He has also been bullying us. I had known your brother by face and as we are in a tight corner we have to think of every possible means to get out of this impasse. This C.I.D. man has been harassing us for five days, and we have to bribe him every time he comes. But he is getting more and more importunate and dangerous, and so we had to think of you. You may not be able to help us in sending Subhas Babu across the frontier, but certainly you can help

us in getting shelter and devising means of escape, and the greatest relief to us under your shelter will be that there will be no apprehension of betrayal. We have been here for the last thirteen days staying in a small room of the *Serai* near Lahori Darwaza. The place is awfully filthy. I tried to establish contact with the Russian Ambassador but my attempt failed."

"After my failure with the Russian Legation, I tried to contact the Italian Ambassador who promised to send Bose Babu to Berlin or Rome after the arrangements were complete. But our first anxiety is to find a safe place for the period we have to stay here."

"You are welcome to my place; but you should bear in mind that there is another person sharing the house I live in. My neighbour occupies the ground floor while I am on the upper flat. And then my house is in the dirtiest locality." I said to Bhagat Ram. Bhagat Ram simply laughed and said, "Do not worry about dirt and filth. The only consideration is safe quarter." It was arranged that Bhagat Ram should come with Bose Babu at four o'clock. At the time of his departure I asked him whether he was passing by his real name, Bhagat Ram said, "I go by the name of Rahmat Khan and Subhas Babu's name is Ziauddin."

After Rahmat Khan's departure I felt a sense of weakness creeping over me and there was a battle royal in my mind about the consequences in case of the discovery of Subhas Babu in my house. A veil of darkness about the fate of my children and wife hung heavily before my eyes, but soon this weakness passed away.

Hours passed by and at ten to four Rahmat Khan arrived all alone. He told me that Bose Babu was waiting on the opposite of the Kabul river which flowed in front of my shop. I accompanied Rahmat Khan, crossed the river bridge at a distance of a furlong from my shop. Subhas Babu was not to be found at the bridge and therefore we proceeded ahead and then Rahmat Khan pointed out a man dressed in an unwashed *salwar* and a dirty shirt. Every inch of him he looked like a Pathan. The new man was coming to us negotiating with difficulty the snow-covered road. The man—Rahmat Khan told me—was Subhas Babu. I was simply non-plussed to see Subhas Babu in that disguise. His identity could not be betrayed. The road was treacherous and there were deep holes and Subhas Babu sometimes stumbled. We decided from our place of meeting to walk one after another in order to ward off any lurking suspicion. By the time I reached my house, followed by Rahmat Khan and Ziauddin, my neighbours had closed their doors owing to intense cold and one or two stray travellers could not be a source of any difficulty.

In the Writer's House

Once inside the house Subhas Babu felt at home and changed his clothes and put on spectacles. With spectacles on it was very easy to recognise him in spite of his beard. Tea was ordered and we all felt refreshed after taking tea. Rahmat Khan was asked to bring the luggage from the *Serai* and my servant Amarnath was sent to help him. Subhas Babu instructed Rahmat Khan that he should be very careful lest he should be shadowed by any C.I.D. man. Rahmat Khan was to give the luggage to Amarnath and was to follow him later on. In case of any suspect on the track Rahmat Khan was ordered to loiter about till he could give him the slip.

After the departure of Rahmat Khan and Amarnath to bring the luggage from the *Serai* I had my difficulties in my own petticoat Government. My wife sensed trouble and was suspicious. She wanted me to tell her categorically who the strangers were and why I wanted her to take a Muslim for a Hindu. She got furious and said that she had known every thing about them as the stranger first talked to me in Pushto and then in Hindustani. I knew that Subhas Babu was going to stay for a few days with me, but it was difficult to keep my wife ignorant about my distinguished guest. So I promised that she would know everything later on.

I then had a prolonged talk with Subhas Babu. He told me that he had left Peshawar on January 19, 1941 and reached Kabul in three days. He was a perfect stranger to Kabul and Rahmat Khan was no better. After great hardship in the way he tumbled into the *Serai* near Lahori Darwaza. The little knowledge of Pushto which Rahmat Khan had, was of considerable help. They were ushered into a shabby dingy cell filled with smoke. Some dry faggots were procured and a fire was prepared. Rahmat Khan purchased some dry bread and meat. It was not possible to eat that bread and so the bread had to be dipped in tea. But more trouble was in store as soon after a man in white clothes began to pay special attention to them. This happened after they had spent a week only in the *Serai.* The man in white clothes was one of the Afghan C.I.D. men. The C.I.D. man asked in Pushto who they were and why they had come to Kabul. Rahmat Khan told him that they were travellers and that he (Subhas Babu) was Rahmat Khan's elder brother and was deaf and dumb and he was being taken to pilgrimage to Sukhi Saheb. As a heavy snow-fall had closed the route to Sukhi Saheb, they were forced to stay. They would start on their journey as soon as the road was open. But the C.I.D. man did not believe them and wanted them to go along with him to the Kotwali. Rahmat Khan then changed tactics and prepared himself to accompany him to Kotwali telling

him that his brother was sick and could not go. The C.I.D. man then softened a little and asked Rahmat Khan to stay till the road was clear and requested him to give him some money for tea. He was given a two-rupee Afghan note but the C.I.D. man had tasted the blood and returned on the third day and threatened to take them to Kotwali. It was then that Subhas Babu decided to shift to some other place. It was equally dangerous to shift to some other *Serai* and therefore it became necessary to find out my residence. A true revolutionary has to take risks and Subhas Babu then ordered Rahmat Khan to take risk in finding me out.

But the C.I.D. man again returned to the game and threatened them with severe consequences as the sub-inspector of Afghan police had wanted to see the two strangers. He told Rahmat Khan that he suspected them to be rebels as the road to Sukhi Saheb was open. The C.I.D. man further asserted that he would care a two-pence for a dumb and deaf man. The situation was getting serious. It was plain that the C.I.D. man had come to squeeze as much money as possible. Rahmat Khan got ready to accompany the C.I.D. man and handed over a five-rupee note to him with the request that his dumb and deaf brother should be spared. This led to a great deal of higgling and bargaining and the settlement was made for Rupees seventeen, but the C.I.D. man further extorted a fine wrist-watch which Rahmat Khan had on his wrist. That watch belonged to Subhas Babu. After the departure of the C.I.D. man, it was with great difficulty that Rahmat Khan could contact me. But for the creative imagination of Subhas Babu it would not have been possible for Rahmat Khan to locate my shop.

The return of Amarnath and Rahmat Khan with the luggage from the *Serai* gave great relief. After dinner we listened to the Radio news and I had to summarise to Subhas Babu all the important news of the last week as he had not listened to or read any news since January 19, 1941. Subhas Babu was simply amused to hear the radio story of the Sadhu's arrest in Hardwar and Sardar Sardul Singh Caveesher's view of his renunciation and becoming a Sadhu.

Before I could request Subhas Babu to tell me the story of his escape from India I had to pacify my wife who had grown more suspicious. She seemed to conjure up fantastic ideas and she told me plainly that it was not possible for her to keep the two strangers in my absence, so I had to take her into confidence. I told her the whole story, with the result that her agitated mind took a new turn. Fear and suspicion gave place to trust and responsibility and she considered it her moral duty to help me and Subhas Babu in our project. It would not have been possible to give such a safe shelter to

Subhas Babu without her meticulous care. I was instructed by Subhas Babu to attend my shop at exact hours and the room in which Subhas Babu was staying used to remain locked up so that any neighbour or relative might not get into that room even by a chance.

THE STORY OF ESCAPE FROM INDIA

I was very anxious to hear from Subhas Babu himself how he managed to penetrate the British barricade of espionage and came to Kabul. So I made a request to him and he was pleased to tell me the whole story. The following is the substance of the story in his own words:—

"I was anxious to get out of India in order to render greater service to my country. I was to be smuggled out to Moscow by a party which promised to make all arrangements but I could not avail myself of that opportunity then. There were two reasons for my refusal. First, I had to attend to some urgent business of the Calcutta Corporation, secondly, I had no beard which I considered so essential for proper disguise. The person who was to accompany me to Kabul had excellent contacts in the Russian Embassy here.

"After attending to the Corporation business I ceased to get out of my house on the pretext to my shattered health. I gave very strict instructions that none should see me. Only a telephonic talk was possible in cases of urgency. Visitors were strictly prohibited. On the 15 of January, 1941 when my beard was forty days old, I set out of the house at midnight in the guise of a Maulvi. I got into a car, and 40 miles away from Calcutta I caught the Mail. The next day a military Sikh passenger came into the compartment. During the course of conversation I told him that I was coming from Lucknow, and was going to Rawalpindi as an Insurance Organiser and that my name was Ziauddin.

"I was putting on a *sherwani* and a fez cap. The tight *pyjama* and my long beard made me look like a perfect Maulvi. I reached Peshawar at 9 P.M. on the 17th January. An already waiting car for me drove me to the appointed place. I spent two days in Peshawar and the arrangements which my friend made at Peshawar for my stay were simply splendid. Nobody knew anything about my stay. On January 19, I put on Pathan clothes, entered a car and drove out of Peshawar on my way to Jamrud. A little distance from the Jamrud Fort a *kachcha* road bifurcates. We proceeded on that road and reached a village, Gurhi where I had to leave the car as the road was not motorable. I passed the night in Gurhi. Next day Rahmat Khan, the two Pathans and myself started on foot for Kabul. The

friends who had escorted me returned to Peshawar with the car. From Gurhi I was to pretend that I was deaf and dumb.

"Next evening we crossed the Indian border and spent the night in the famous shrine of Addah Sharif as guests of the Pir. The two armed Pathans were replaced by three others who were equally armed. We reached Lalpura in the evening and were the guests of a very influential Khan of the place.

"I left Lalpura with a very important letter of introduction from the Chief. The letter was in Persian and its contents were that Rahmat Khan and Ziauddin were going on a pilgrimage to Sukhi Saheb's shrine and that they were inhabitants of the tribal area and that nobody should molest them. That letter of introduction when shown to the Afghan C.I.D. man saved us from his clutches. But that C.I.D. man was more after money than after a certificate of good character.

"After a few miles from Lalpura we reached the Kabul river and crossed it on leather bags tied together. I had to avoid the usual road between Dukka and Peshawar as on this road passports are checked at three places. It was with great difficulty that we caught a lorry. Snow was falling all round. We had no warm clothes. The lorry was packed with boxes. So we had to sit on the top of the lorry. We spent the whole night in the bus and had to take tea several times.

"The next day we reached Buttkhak. The passports are checked here. Rahmat Khan produced Lalpura Khan's certificate and he told the officer that I was deaf and dumb. After taking tea, we got into the lorry and reached Kabul between four and five in the afternoon. We had taken care to bring sufficient Afghan currency with us."

I was thrilled to listen to the adventurous journey of Subhas Babu. Food was served and after meals we listened to the Radio.

Difficulties and Plans

It will not be out of place if I were to state very frankly that Subhas Babu was greatly handicapped on account of very bad arrangements his friends made for him to contact the Russian Legation. The language difficulty was another trouble. Even Rahmat Khan was as good a stranger as Subhas Babu. With great difficulty they could locate the Russian Legation but it was not possible to enter the Legation. So they resorted to an uncertain way of contacting the Russian Ambassador. When the Russian Ambassador's car passed by near the Legation Rahmat Khan waved his hand. The car stopped and Rahmat Khan told the Ambassador that Subhas

Chandra Bose was with him. In broken Persian Rahmat Khan tried to explain the whole thing. But the Ambassador was not prepared to believe the story. The chances of falling into the hands of the Afghan Police began to loom large. Then Rahmat Khan managed to enter the Italian Legation and told Signor Karoni the Charge-de-Affaires all about Subhas Babu. Signor Karoni was mightily pleased to hear of the presence of Subhas Babu in Kabul and promised to send him to Rome or Berlin. He also fixed up the meeting place at the residence of a German living in Kabul. Herr Thomas was the German where Rahmat Khan was to receive a message.

Rahmat Khan went to Herr Thomas on the appointed day where he found a letter from Signor Karoni. The contents of the letter were very encouraging as Berlin and Rome expressed great pleasure at the news of arrival of Subhas Babu and Signor Karoni had orders to help him.

In order to avoid any possible suspicion it was decided that I should take messages to Herr Thomas instead of Rahmat Khan. I was a declared Radio-dealer and could go anywhere, and Rahmat Khan was in danger of being spotted by the Lahori Darwaza C.I.D. man. I carried a message from Subhas Babu to Herr Thomas who had to transfer that letter to the Italian Legation. I was informed that Herr Thomas had no message to give.

A Fresh Trouble

On the 6th of February 1941, something happened which disturbed us a good deal. When we were taking our morning tea my neighbour happened to come into our flat. I used to keep the entrance door of Subhas Babu's room closed. That day my daughter forgot to shut the door. My neighbour was an honourable man. But the moment he glanced at Subhas Babu he stood petrified. I was sure that he had recognised him. In the evening my neighbour came and told me that he was too ill to stay in that house. It was necessary, therefore, for the sake of precaution that Subhas Babu should shift to a *Serai* for a few days. If nothing happened in two or three days Subhas Babu should come back to my residence. My neighbour confessed to me the day after that he had recognised Subhas Babu and he was mentally disturbed so much that he could not stay in the house for the fear of being arrested as the British Government must be hot in the trail of Subhas Babu.

On the 9th of February Signora Karoni came to my shop and left a letter containing the information that the message of thanks from Subhas

Babu had been conveyed to Rome and Berlin and the Italian Embassy at Moscow had been asked to arrange the passport.

Subhas Babu's Illness and Contact with Axis Legations

On the 10th of February at about twelve o'clock Rahmat Khan came to me and informed me that Subhas Babu had taken ill. He had dysentery owing to the bad food from the *bazar*. There was no chance of his being examined by a doctor. So it was decided that he should come back to my place. He came at about 7-30 P.M. the same day and in several days he regained his normal health. This time my wife made fool-proof arrangements against any untoward happening.

A week passed and there was no message from the Italian Legation and Subhas Babu sent another note to Signor Karoni through Herr Thomas reminding the Italian Ambassador that since he contacted him three weeks had passed and no message had come about his passport from the Embassy at Moscow. The following day Signora Karoni came and delivered a sealed envelope conveying the message that there was some difficulty at Moscow about the passport. This news disturbed us all. Subhas Babu then wrote out a detailed letter for the Russian Ambassador. He narrated in the letter the whole story of his escape from India and requested him for an interview. The letter was strictly to be delivered to the Russian Ambassador himself. In spite of our best efforts the letter could not be delivered direct to the Russian Ambassador.

Two days later Signora Karoni came with another note. It was quite clear from the note that there was some trouble at Moscow about the passport. With the greatest difficulty Russia agreed to the Axis request and couriers were reported to be coming from Rome and there would be no further difficulty for the passage. Another week passed and there was no message.

Plan to Smuggle into Russia

Subhas Babu began to be worried owing to the delay. He was depressed. I requested him to go out for a walk but he did not like to stir out of the house. Only once he went out with me for tea at the residence of Haji who was a great admirer of Subhas Babu. Plans were discussed to cross into the Russian border as he was simply disgusted with the present position in Kabul. I suggested the name of a man who had several times been to the Afghan side of the river Hango which divides Russia from Afghanistan. The man who was to escort Subhas Babu was an absconder

from the Frontier side. I had a talk with the proposed guide and he promised that it would be possible for him to smuggle my friend (Subhas Babu) in disguise. The deal was settled for seven hundred Afghan rupees.

Rahmat Khan was brought in contact with the guide and they together discussed plans, and next morning the guide came and was given some money to purchase articles.

A New Problem and its Solution

In the meantime another problem cropped up. A friend of mine from Peshawar named Jiwan Lal visited me at the shop. He used to come to Kabul for wholesale purchases of dried fruits. In course of conversation I asked him what people thought of Bose Babu's disappearance. Jiwan Lal told me that the British had imprisoned him and they were spreading a lie that he had disappeared. Jiwan Lal was anxious to dine with me as usual. I told him that my wife was ill and he had to go away.

Next day Rahmat Khan and the guide came for a further talk about the journey. No sooner had Rahmat Khan and the guide arrived than Jiwan Lal also dropped in. Jiwan Lal had known the guide before and considered him a professional gambler. Rahmat Khan was clever enough and went away. Jiwan Lal took me to task for having friendly relation with a professional gambler. Jiwan Lal also saw me handing over a hundred-rupee note to the guide and naturally he was shocked and scolded me. His impression was that I associated with these two gamblers. Jiwan Lal persisted in asking about the companion (Rahmat Khan) of the guide.

In the evening I told Subhas Babu what had happened. He told me that I was at liberty to do what I liked in taking into confidence Jiwan Lal, but it was better to wait.

Jiwan Lal came next day and while I was talking with him Signora Karoni came and passed an envelope into my hands. This made Jiwan Lal all the more suspicious. I was subjected to a fiery cross-examination by him and he wanted to know about the contents of the envelope. Jiwan Lal was annoyed and went away. The contents of the note were satisfactory. The couriers had left Rome and in a week's time they would be in Kabul. Subhas Babu was requested to come to Darulman for a photograph on the following day at 11 A.M. A car would be waiting for him. After his photo he will be left at a point whence he would be picked up.

Decision to go to Berlin

In the evening the guide came and he was told that it would not be possible to finalize plans for the escape of my friend across the Russian border owing to his illness.

In the evening the same day we discussed at home whether Subhas Babu should try to cross the Afghan border with the guide or whether he should wait for the Axis Couriers. It was decided after discussion that there was no harm in waiting. With regard to Jiwan Lal also we came to the conclusion that the best course under the circumstances was to tell him the secret that Subhas Babu was staying with me, otherwise there was a greater chance for Jiwan Lal to spread the gossip in the town that some mysterious persons used to visit me. So when I told Jiwan Lal about the whole thing and reprimanded him for his curiosity about the persons who visited me, he was simply stunned.

We again discussed the pros and cons of the two alternatives of going to Berlin or Rome with the help of the Axis Powers or of crossing into the Russian border with the guide without the help of Axis or the Russian Power. Rahmat Khan and I were of the opinion that Bose Babu should cross into the Russian border. But Bose Babu's decision was that he should go out of Afghanistan safely and would not like the idea of being arrested before crossing into Russia. He preferred to go to Moscow but the attitude of the Russian Ambassador at Kabul stood in the way and he said that it would be easier, if need be, to come back to Moscow from Berlin or Rome. So everything was settled under the circumstances in favour of the Axis.

Next day Signora Karoni came and informed me that the photograph was quite alright and the passport was also ready and they were waiting for the Couriers. We then made arrangements for Subhas Babu for his journey. Two suits were made for him, and the next days were spent in the purchase of articles for the journey and a final message also came that Bose Babu was to leave on March 18 and he was to reach the residence of Signora Karoni by 8 P.M. on March 17. The guide who was to help Subhas Babu in crossing the Afghan border into the Russian had to be got rid of and had to be told that the journey to the Russian border had to be abandoned owing to the illness of my friend and the desire of Rahmat Khan to get back to India.

At 3 P.M. Signora Karoni came and took away Subhas Babu's suitcase.

Departure from Kabul

On March 17, 1941 Subhas Babu left my house at 10 A.M. after bidding good-bye to us. The parting was so affectionate that it stirred our emotions. I bade him good-bye at Signora Karoni's house.

On March 18 at about 10 A.M. Rahmat Khan came to my shop and told me that Bose Babu had left at 9 A.M. He was accompanied by two Germans and one Italian. In the passport given by the Italian his name was put down as Mozatia.

One of the Germans who accompanied Bose Babu was Dr. Weller, Dr. Weller was a very clever man. In fact, Bose Babu was assigned to the Germans.

Dr. Weller escorted him to Berlin. From Kabul they drove to the Russian frontier. On March 20 Subhas Babu left by train for Moscow from the Russian border. After some days a German Magazine with the news of Bose Babu's arrival in Berlin was sent to me. Under the picture of Bose Babu was written in German "India's great leader and former President of the Indian National Congress Subhas Chandra Bose who some time ago had mysteriously disappeared from India safely reached Berlin on March 28."

I was informed later on by Signora Karoni that Bose Babu reached Moscow on March 27, stayed there for a night, and on the 28th March flew from Moscow to Berlin.

British Secret Serviceman and My Arrest

After a few days I was accosted by a person, named Bashi Sahib, who was rumoured to be an agent of the British Secret Service. He told me that he had information that I could tell him the whereabouts of the two Indians hiding in my 'Muhalla', and the two Indians, he said, had recently escaped from India. When I expressed my inability to the British Secret Service agent he told me that nobody else could help him in that matter excepting myself. After discussion Bashi Sahib told me that one of the escapee was Subhas Chandra Bose, a topmost leader of India. I told him that I was a businessman and had nothing to do with politics or political leaders; but I should be obliged to him if he could help me to have Subhas Babu's 'darshan'. But in my heart of hearts I sensed danger and felt that something was brewing in the espionage cauldron of the British Government. I tried to analyse the situation. There were several alternatives. First, the German Foreign office might be the source of leakage of the secret. But in that case it would have been easy to spot me immediately and my doubts were set at rest when

a few days later Signora Karoni came to see me. With her came a responsible member of the German Legation who had recently come to Kabul from Berlin. I complained to the German Officer that the British Secret Service agent Bashi Saheb told me what the British agent had learnt from the Afghan Ambassador at Berlin. The German Officer simply laughed and assured me that no leakage was possible from the German Legation. The only possible alternative seemed to be that the Peshawar C.I.D. must have looked for Rahmat Khan and not being able to trace him must have connected him with Bose Babu's escape to Kabul. But it was too late and the tiger had disappeared.

It may not be out of place to mention that after my arrest in May 1941 at Kabul whence I was sent to Jalalabad in fetters and then transferred to the Indian jail, Jiwan Lal was also arrested and thrown into prison. His only fault was that he used to meet me. What and how I suffered later on and how my property at Kabul was confiscated, is a story which throws a lurid light on the helplessness of India under foreign yoke. Independent India alone could have taken up my case.

Subhas Babu's Strategy

Finally, I shall like to discuss one or two points about the political strategy of Subhas Babu which prompted him to leave his country at a crucial time. I discussed with him this vital question and I can give here only the substance of the talk I had. A verbatim report is not possible. Subhas Babu's conviction was that the British would not quit India until and unless they were thrown out by a bloody revolution. The British had never freed any country willingly. He mentioned Ireland by way of example. Ireland passed through the fire of purgatory and after seven hundred years of struggle and suffering she could win her freedom, but still Ulster was there. The British people were engaged in a mortal struggle in the World War II and for the sake of independence of India Indians should take advantage of the psychological world situation. The British had created such a situation in India as made a successful revolution an impossibility. History tells us that all successful revolutions were brought about with the help of a foreign Power. Russia and America won their independence with the help of Germany and France respectively. He preferred Russian help to the Axis help. He told me very plainly that instead of rotting in prison in India for the duration of the war, he would like to do what he could from outside. He had full faith in God and did not attach much importance to religious dissensions in

India which were the creation of the British Government. His belief was that India suffered from political ills and the remedy lay in her liberation from the foreign yoke. He had perfect faith in India's destiny and was prepared to stake every drop of his blood for her liberation.

Subhas Babu stayed with me for forty-three days. I feel those hectic days were really the happiest days of my life. I am glad that I was able to render some service to that illustrious and great son of India whose very life-breath was the liberation of our Motherland.

"He was one of India's greatest patriots and he fearlessly sacrificed everything for the cause of his country's freedom. His life and career will serve as a source of inspiration to generations of Indians, irrespective of caste, creed or community."

—*Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee*

THE I.N.A. AND THE I.N.C.

'Quit India' Abroad and at Home

By ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI

Superficial observers ask: Why does the Congress, which was against the Japanese invasion of India, take such a keen interest in the fate of the members of the I.N.A.?

If the men of the I.N.A. are brave patriots even though they were in alliance with Japan, why did not the Congress advocate and adopt a similar policy during the war?

It is also pointed out that the August, 1942, "Quit India" resolution was passed on the plea that only a free India could successfully organise resistance to Japan and save India from the fate of Malaya and Burma.

Instead of passing the "Quit India" resolution and inviting trouble for itself and the country, why did not Congress bide its time and wait and strike at British imperialism at the psychological moment of actual foreign invasion, as did the underground movements in Europe?

Why did the Congress decide to start its movement during the monsoons when the Japanese invasion, if not impossible, was improbable?

What were the reasons behind the Congress attitude then and what are the reasons for its changed attitude now as evidenced by its whole-hearted support of the cause of the I.N.A.?

To understand these questions one has to study the history of the Congress movement, as it has developed under the leadership of Gandhiji. The Congress under his guidance has accepted the creed that it will use only peaceful and legitimate means for the attainment of its goal. It has as a consequence eschewed the traditional way of war and violence for achieving national liberation. It has also discarded current diplomacy that regulates political, and international conduct in peace and war. This morality sanctioned both violent war and Machiavellian diplomacy as legitimate weapons to achieve laudable ends. (And what ends in politics are not laudable!)

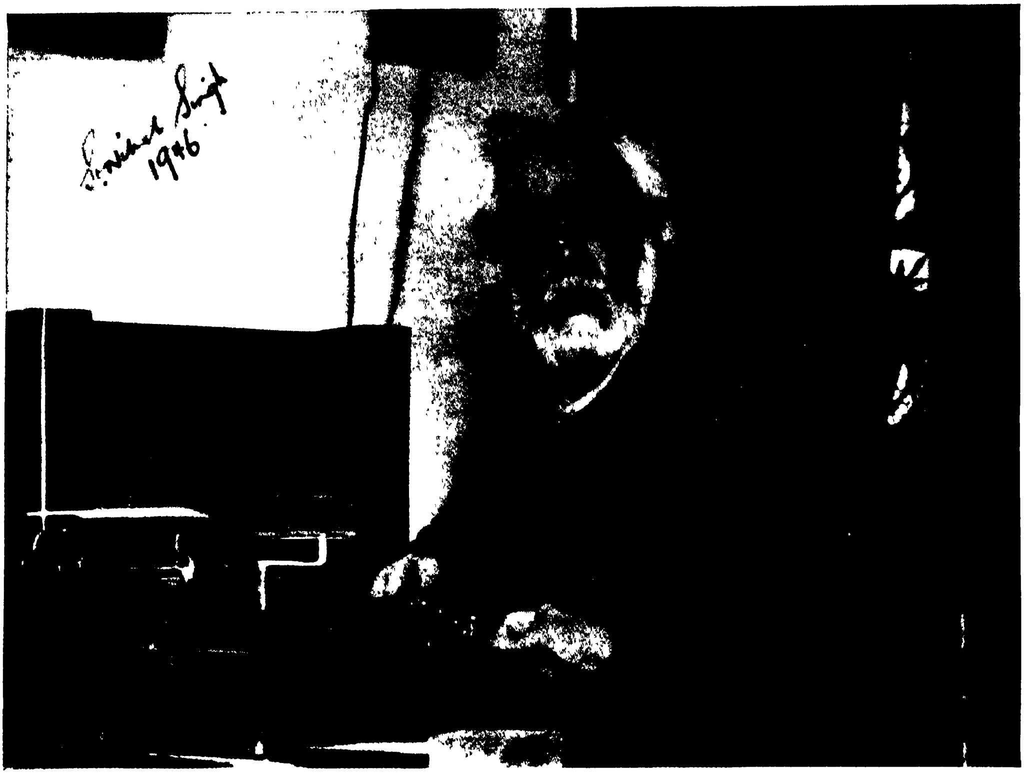
The Congress has been trying for the last twenty years and more to educate and drill the country into the new Gandhian principles of non-violent resistance and open and honest diplomacy. Holding and pro-



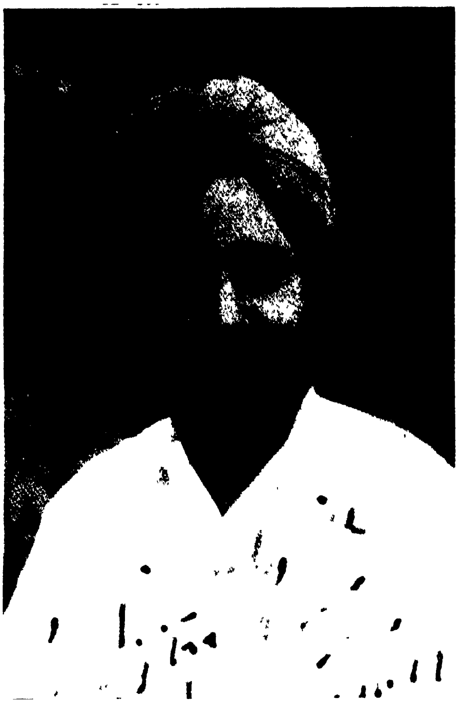
Shri Rajendra Prasad



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pagating these novel views, the Congress, if it was to be true to its basic creed and to the leadership of Gandhiji, could not possibly invite foreign armed intervention in its fight for freedom. It could not negotiate a secret alliance with Germany or Japan, as all such negotiations would have been in terms of armed assistance.

The Invader

As the war progressed in the West and the East there was enough ill-will against the British in India to make the general population indifferent to the British reverses. This ill-will was daily growing in volume. The Congress felt that this justifiable attitude towards the British would reduce India in the event of the Japanese invasion to the helpless condition of Malaya and Burma. The Congress wanted to foster the spirit of resistance to all foreign interference in Indian affairs, whether old or new. The "Quit India" resolution was among other things the result of this attitude of the Congress. It believed that a population that could not resist the existing foreign rule, with all its tyranny, suppression and terrorism infinitely increased in wartime, was not likely to resist a new invader. Nay, it may even welcome such an invader, as did Malaya and Burma. This attitude would further un-nerve the people and enervate them. The Congress also believed that if there was to be any resistance to the Japanese that could come only from a free India. This imperial resistance had already failed miserably.

Ancient Precept

If the Congress had believed in the current political morality that regulates international conduct, it would have been glad that England was in a strait plight and would have taken advantage of its difficulties and tried to come to some sort of secret understanding with England's enemies. Such a course would have been in consonance with approved historical precedents. National freedom movements through the ages have tried to take advantage of the difficulties of foreign masters and sought alliances to free themselves. In the *Mahabharata* it is said that a weaker king, when his independence is threatened by a stronger one, should seek alliance with the enemies of the latter. The common enmity should be taken advantage of. In this connection the significant simile of the thorn-in-the-foot is given. As a person takes out the thorn from his foot with the help of another and then throws both away, so must a prince act when faced with like a political situation. Coming to modern times, in their war of independence the Americans

took the help of the French against the mother country. If it has been possible for the French armies to land in America, the Americans would have welcomed them with open arms. This taking of help from the French or even the invitation to their forces to land in America would not have meant that the Americans wanted a change of masters.

Italian patriots in the nineteenth century were found in every court in Europe asking for armed assistance against Austria. In the last war British armies were invited to defend French and Belgian soil from German aggression. In the Spanish Civil War both sides sought for and invited the foreign forces that invaded the country. No side was on that account prepared to allow the foreigner to occupy Spanish soil. In the present war France again invited British armies for defence against Germany. Though there was no love lost between Russia and England, they allied themselves against the common enemy. Even differing political ideologies did not stand in the way of mutual help in the immediate object, the resistance to Germany.

Aid to Russia

Russia, if it had been possible, would have welcomed British soldiers on its soil and so would England have welcomed Russian soldiers on its soil if it had been attacked or invaded. Those in both countries, who would have negotiated and called for such foreign armed assistance would not have been considered criminals and traitors but patriots working for the independence and honour of their country. Dr. Benes was a suppliant for Allied invasion of his land to drive away the Germans. It was quite possible that the allies may have occupied Czech territory after having driven away the Germans. Such risks are usually taken. General de Gaulle, an undoubted French patriot, invited the allies not only to invade occupied France but also unoccupied France. Those Frenchmen who betrayed what may be said to be their own Government and invited the allies to occupy French territory in Africa are not considered "Quislings" and traitors but as brave patriots who took risks for the love of their country and its independence.

To-day who are the war criminals and traitors in European countries freed from German occupation? They are those who failed to invite the foreigners to drive away the Germans. The Petains and the Lavals in every land are the traitors and they have to pay with their lives.

Bose's Act

In 1941 Sri Subhas Chandra Bose managed to elude the all-powerful British C.I.D. and the police and escaped from this unhappy land. He

did this not to avoid prison-life but to seek foreign help for Indian independence even as did Dr. Benes and General de Gaulle. This act of Sri Subhas Bose was as great an act of patriotism as similar acts of many patriot-politicians in European lands. Throughout political history imprisoned patriots have escaped from jail or from their enslaved country and they have received for their bold adventure nothing but praise.

Shivaji by a clever ruse escaped from the clutches of Aurangzeb. Nobody considers that his action was politically wrong. In the Boer War Churchill was a war-prisoner and his biographies record his escape from an enemy prison-camp as an act of resourcefulness and courage. All the allied prisoners who escaped from German and Italian prison-camps are praised for their undoubted courage. Such escapes involve stratagem and an amount of what in civil life would be called deceit and deception. There is in all these cases an element of breach of faith. But all this is justified on the assumption that the initial act of imprisonment was itself wrong and immoral. What Sri Subhas Bose did may not have been done by his Satyagrahi colleagues in the Congress. They have under Gandhiji's inspiration accepted other than the current standards of political morality in these matters. The new morality of non-violent resistance and open diplomacy has not been generally accepted by the nations. The Congress is the only political organization in the world that has made Gandhiji's new principles in politics its own. The rest of the world yet believes in and regulates its conduct by the rules of conventional morality.

The Standards

Only those who have accepted these principles can be judged by them. The rest must in practice be judged by the standards of current conventional morality. If this were not so, Gandhiji could not have expressed sympathy for the armed resistance that Poland, China and Russia made to German aggression; therefore, when the Congressmen have to judge the actions of Sri Subhas Bose and his companions in the I.N.A. they would be wrong to judge them by the new standards of Satyagraha. It would be an injustice done to leave patriots who fought for the freedom of their land as valiantly and well as patriots in any land in the East or the West. In their effort to liberate their country from foreign yoke they took the highest personal risks. Many of them whitened the battlefields in Assam and Burma with their bones. The remaining leaders of the movement to-day face the farce of the court martial as criminals on charges that involve capital punishment.

The least that we, their countrymen, can do is to understand and appreciate their point of view and not judge them by standards which they never accepted (if they had, they would not have joined the British army) and which the world at large has not accepted. The judges believe in the same morality as the victims.

Rules of Morality

Even in ordinary life there are various standards of conduct prescribed for different professions and classes. Each profession and class is judged in practical affairs by the best current conventions. A *Sadhu* or a teacher making his purchases in the bazar may not judge the conduct of the merchant by the same standards of honesty and rectitude that he observes in his own life. He is bound to judge his own conduct in consonance with the conventional or the best standards of morality in his profession and class. But the merchant and lawyer he must judge in accordance with the conventional morality that regulates the conduct of these professions. So while we of the Congress would judge our own actions by the light of the new principles that under Gandhiji's lead we have accepted, we would be wrong if we judge the conduct of those who are fired by the same zeal for national honour and independence as ourselves, by standards which they have not accepted and which are not generally accepted. Judged by the conventional rules of political morality, the members of the I.N.A. are as good gentlemen and as great patriots as the best in any land. What is good and patriotic conduct in England, in France, in America does not cease to be so in India. Two and two make four whether in England or in India. Love of the country and service to it and sacrifice for its good are the ingredients of patriotism whether in imperial countries or in unfortunate colonial lands. Rules of morality and mathematics do not change from land to land.

Voluntary Army

Every day independent testimony is accumulating that Subhas Bose and his companions were jealous of the interference of Japan in their affairs. Some of them had to suffer for resisting such Jap officiousness. They were fully alive to the danger of inviting the foreigner to help in the struggle of national independence. They, therefore, organized their own army, their own finances, their own civil administration as independently of the Japs as was humanly possible under the circumstances. Were the Indian independence movement outside India not inspired by the highest patriotic

purpose it could not have commanded the voluntary service and allegiance of the Indian community in South-East Asia. Indians abroad contributed to the funds of the movement with a liberality that Indians in India may well emulate. The I.N.A. exploded for ever the myth that there is not material enough in India for the training of the officers of all ranks and classes for the fighting forces. The provisional Government of Independent India not only created an efficient army but added to it a women's corps, as earnest, efficient and patriotic as similar corps elsewhere. And all this was done in the short space of not more than a year.

Oath of Allegiance

It is said that the members of the I.N.A., specially former soldiers of the British Indian army, broke their oath of allegiance. In political morality such oaths by those in subjection are not held as sacred or binding. Did not members of the Vichy Government in Africa break their oath of allegiance to their Government and was not their action applauded by the allies! Such oaths of allegiance, as the Englishman well knows, are a matter of political convenience. They do not touch the conscience of those who take them. In history such oaths have been as often broken as made. Moreover, the allegiance to the king is always taken not as personal allegiance but as an act of national loyalty. The king merely symbolizes the nation. The Canadian, the South African, the Australian took this oath with the full knowledge that the person of the king did not come in anywhere. If this were not so, the last King Edward the Eighth would not have been obliged to abdicate by his ministers who had taken the oath of allegiance to him.

Moreover, in English history patriots have not only broken such oaths of allegiance but also in the service of their land sacrificed the person of their king if he had stood in the way of such service. An Englishman may behead his king and yet raise the cry 'God save the King'. The oath of allegiance, therefore, means only allegiance to the country. In so far as the men of the I.N.A. have been loyal and faithful to their country they have fulfilled the requirements of the oath of allegiance to the king. Rather, those Indians, and unfortunately there are so many of them, who work against the best interests of the country, are the enemies of the king because in his name they betray the people.

Apart from English political and legal conventions, the King of England can be the king of India as legitimately as the Kaiser was the King of Belgium and France in World War Number One or the Japanese Emperor

was the emperor of the East Asian countries in the recent war. These are unnatural things that must be swept away. There can be no prescriptive right in things illegally and unjustly acquired. Length of possession in such cases creates no rights as against the natural and rightful owners.

Judged, therefore, from the view of conventional political morality, the members of the I.N.A. are patriots and not criminals. And we salute them as such.

JAI HIND.

"He was not only brave but had deep love for freedom and whatever he did he did it for the Independence of India.....Nobody can doubt his sincerity that he has been struggling for the whole of his life for the Independence of India in his own way."

—*Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*



NAWAB SALAR JUNG BAHADUR.



NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE—SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF HIS CHARACTER

Major-General A. C. CHATTERJEE

1. In the life-history of a nation leaders appear from time to time particularly at the time of crisis. The nation which is virile and possesses the spirit of nationalism produces such a leader who can give the correct directive to the nation's activities at the critical period. The more a nation is alive the greater the chances of such a leader coming forward to lead the nation. National leaders are usually born as such, but they must possess certain definite basic fundamental qualities without which they cannot perform the functions which are expected of them. Some of these qualities, such as personality, power of command, initiative, courage, determination and sincerity, are inherent in a leader and are manifested even in the early stages of his life, while there are other qualities, such as the wider outlook of the world, knowledge regarding the different characteristics and problems concerning his own nation as well as of the world, power of organisation, assaying correctly the value of different things, the procedure and method of tackling different problems etc., which are acquired or develop with the advance of age and growth of experience in the leader.

2. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the born leaders of this country. He showed the first signs of leadership when as a college boy himself he led the students in the Presidency College who protested against the ill behaviour of Professor Oaten towards the students of that College. Later, when for a time he came under the influence of his father and tried to serve the country through official channels, he went and successfully passed the I.C.S. Examination. But on his return he was undoubtedly affected by the political atmosphere in the country and the progress of events that had rapidly developed from 1919 to 1921. When Mahatma Gandhi called the nation to non-violent non-co-operation, young Subhas Chandra immediately responded to his clarion call, gave up his official position, and joined the Movement. This meant a sacrifice which not many can easily go through. This movement was undoubtedly a national movement as it was based on Hindu-Muslim unity and a struggle which was a stepping stone for achieving the freedom of the country. He saw the nationwide upheaval which spread throughout the length and breadth of India in

1920-21. He studied deeply the political problems of the country and made up his mind. Among other qualities he possessed all those mentioned above there were some in which he was most outstanding. These were his sincerity of purpose which in practical public life meant determined and uncompromising opposition towards British rule in India. Secondly, his unbounded love for his people and country. Thirdly, his power of organization. Fourthly, his political sagacity and farsightedness.

3. UNCOMPROMISING OPPOSITION TO BRITISH RULE IN INDIA:

He joined wholeheartedly the national movement for the freedom of the Motherland, and since then it has been his consistent policy to oppose British rule in India. His determined and uncompromising attitude towards the existing system was not only remarkably shown at the All-India Congress session from his sick-bed at Tripuri and at Ramghar, but also by his repeated incarceration in British jails and detention and exile in lands beyond the borders of his mother country. In spite of the fact that during a fairly long period his health was failing from time to time, he never flinched for a moment in his determination to uproot British rule from the country. That this was the correct lead is amply proved by the support he got in the re-election for a second term of the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in spite of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress High Command had opposed his stand against Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya. The youth of the country gave him unstinted support and he won the election by a huge majority. That meant that the country was solidly behind him at the time. Later, when on account of internal dissensions which really, in certain instances, amounted almost to betrayal, it was this undaunted determination of his to break the system of Government which was tyrannizing over the people that induced him to leave his country, so that he could, if possible, try for her liberation from outside the country. The step that he took was not only most inconvenient but dangerous for himself. If he had adopted the line of least resistance by remaining in India, and had passed his time as a guest of His Britannic Majesty, it would have been a far more comfortable life for him, a life far less risky and dangerous for himself. But it was his absolute uncompromising determination against the present system of Government that had guided his footsteps to adopt a line of action that he took in 1941. His subsequent action in leading the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia, and re-organizing the *Azad Hind Fauj*, and fighting on the Indo-Burma Front, only still further demonstrated his consistent and determined opposition to British rule in India.

4. LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE AND COUNTRY:

(*i*) He was essentially kind-hearted, but his love for his people and country knew no bound. From his early age his character showed that he felt deeply for the poor. His heart longed to serve the *daridra-narayan* (the Lord who dwelt in the poor) of his country. He loved all, but he had special affection for the youth of his country. He always appealed to them for devoting their lives to the service of their country. and personally set the example.

(*ii*) His love for his people was irrespective of caste, creed or race. It was the love for his people, their extreme poverty and their systematic exploitation, that roused in him the determination to break down the present system of Government to release his people from slavery and promote their economic welfare. His whole life and the different steps that he took from time to time and the sacrifices that he had made, all denoted the basic foundation of his love for his people and country. This is beautifully exemplified in his statement which he sent to H. E. the Governor of Bengal as well as to the members of the Ministerial Cabinet of Bengal in November, 1940, from his prison. He said in his statement: "Though there may be no immediate tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering that in every age and clime the eternal law prevails that 'the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church.' In the mortal world everything perishes and will perish, but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.......Hence, it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earthly, he will gain much more in turn by becoming the heir to a life immortal. This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die, so that India may live and may win freedom and glory." Again, towards the end of his letter dated 6-4-1939 addressed to Mahatma Gandhi he says, "It is my firm conviction that a nation can live, only if the individuals composing it be ready to die for its sake whenever it is neecssary. This moral (or spiritual) *harakiri* is not an easy thing. But may god grant me the strength to face it whenever the country's interests demand it."

(*iii*) Not only did he love the poor, the humble, and the unknown of his country, but he also loved and respected those who did not see eye to eye with him in matters political, for example, with regard to the means for the

attainment of his country's independence. It is well known that his views differed from that of Mahatmaji. Yet he loved and respected Mahatmaji very deeply indeed. Extracts from his letters and speeches quoted below clearly show that

(*a*) Extract from statement made in Jharia on 25-3-1939:

"In conclusion, I should like to state clearly that as matters stand today, Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress out of the present morass and restore unity within our ranks, and it is our misfortune that he could not come to Tripuri, otherwise the situation would not have worsened so much."

(*b*) Extract from letter dated 31-3-1939 addressed to Mahatmaji:

" If, for any reason that confidence is shaken—which God forbid—and you are regarded as a partisan, then God help us and the Congress. There is no doubt that there is today a wide gulf between the two main parties or blocs in the Congress. But the gulf can yet be bridged—and that by you."

(*c*) Extract from a broadcast by Netaji from Singapore on 2-10-1943 on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday celebrations in S.-E. Asia:

"I shall devote myself to an estimation of the place of Mahatmaji in the history of India's struggle for independence. The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time to come.

"When the last World War was over and Indian leaders began to demand the liberty that had been promised to them, they discovered for the first time that they had been betrayed by perfidious Albion. The reply to their demand came in the form of the Rowlatt Act in 1919, which deprived them of what little liberty they still possessed. And when they protested against that Black Act, the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre followed. For all the sacrifices made by the Indian people during the last

World War, the two rewards were the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre.

"After the tragic events of 1919, Indians were stunned and paralysed for the time being. All the attempts for achieving liberty had been ruthlessly crushed by the British, and their armed forces. Constitutional agitation, boycott of British goods, armed revolution, all had alike failed to bring freedom. There was not a ray of hope left, and the Indian people were groping in the dark for a new method and a new weapon of struggle. Just at this psychological moment Gandhiji appeared with his novel method of Non-Co-operation or Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience. It appeared as if he had been sent by Providence to show the path to liberty. Immediately and spontaneously the whole nation rallied round his banner. India was saved. Every Indian's face was now lit up with hope and confidence. Ultimate victory was once again assured.

"For twenty years and more Mahatma Gandhi has worked for India's salvation, and with him the Indian people have worked.

" It is no exaggeration to say that if in 1920 he had not come forward with his new weapon of struggle, India today would perhaps have been still prostrate. His services to the cause of India's freedom are unique and unparalleled. No single man could have achieved more in a single lifetime under similar circumstances. The nearest historical parallel to Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps Mustapha Kemal, who saved Turkey after her defeat in the last World War, and who was then acclaimed by the Turks as "the Ghazi".

" Since 1920 the Indians have learnt two things from Mahatma Gandhi, which are the indispensable pre-conditions for the attainment of independence. They have, first of all, learnt national self-confidence as a result of which revolutionary fervour is now blazing in their hearts. Secondly, they have now got a country-wide organization which reaches the remotest village of India.

" Mahatma Gandhi has firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty. He and other leaders are now rotting behind prison bar. The task that Mahatma Gandhi began has, therefore, to be accomplished by his countrymen at home and abroad."

(d) Extract from a broadcast message from Rangoon by Netaji to Mahatmaji on 6-7-1944:—

> " Father of our Nation! In this holy war for India's liberation we ask for your blessings and good wishes."

(*iv*) Some people have accused him of playing power politics and of being fond of show for himself, but his actions and sacrifices do not justify this accusation. On the contrary, they only show that he has tried always to put first the cause of the people before that of his own. He could have led a comparatively easy life, and probably would have gained honours in officialdom in the existing bureaucracy, and even in the Calcutta Corporation if he wanted, but he sacrificed all for the sake of higher considerations of the nation's service. His reply to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's appeal to him to withdraw his resignation as President of the Indian National Congress at the meeting of the A.-I.C.C. in Calcutta on April 29, 1939 showed clearly that he had submitted that resignation after fully exploring all the possibilities for arriving at an honourable settlement that failed. He, therefore, did not want to stand in the way of the country's good. Netaji replied:

> " Serious and critical times are ahead of us. We must pull our resources and pull our whole weight if we are to emerge triumphant out of the external crisis that is fast overtaking us. To this arduous task I shall contribute my humble mite. What does it matter if I am not in the Presidential chair? My services will always be at the disposal of the Congress and the country for what they are worth. I claim to have sufficient patriotism and sufficient sense of discipline to be able to work as an ordinary soldier in this great fight for India's political and economic emancipation."

He knew how to efface himself for the sake of the country when the occasion arose. Extract from letter dated 31-3-39 addressed to Mahatmaji:—

> " All that I want is that you and the Congress should in this critical hour stand up and resume the struggle for *Swaraj*. If self-effacement will further the national cause, I assure you most solemnly that I am prepared to efface myself completely. I think I love my country sufficiently to be able to do this."

(*v*) His inherent kindness was so great that he repeatedly told the members of his *Azad Hind Fauj* to leave the ranks if any of them did not feel inclined to fight. He would willingly give them the opportunity to go rather than be compelled to award drastic punishments for their cowardice in the field of battle. In a Special Order of the Day on the 13th March, 1945 he said:

> "I am giving an opportunity to all members of the Azad Hind Fauj who may not feel inclined to work dutifully or fight courageously in future to leave the ranks of the *Azad Hind Fauj*. This offer will be open for one week from the time of its communication."

It was his inherent kindness of heart that sometimes weakened him and stood in the way of taking the strictest measures against delinquents and those who deserved harsher punishment. This was evident with regard to his orders relating to the spies of the British who were captured as well as those who broke the law, during the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia. There is no history of revolution in any country which can claim to have avoided shedding the blood of one's own countrymen; but with respect to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, it can be definitely and frankly stated that his hands were not discoloured with the blood of his own countrymen, and were perfectly clean. This is a matter of great pride for all of us who were in the Indian Independence Movement. On the other hand, he was even lenient to those who broke the law.

(*vi*) That he loved his people, whether civilian or military, intensively and was prepared to undergo the same type of hardship and suffering as they underwent, was demonstrated at the time of our retreat from Rangoon to Bangkok. He could have easily gone by aeroplane, but he refused and marched long distances along with the troops by day as well as by night. On the line of march he partook of the same food as they did, slept on the ground as they did, and underwent all the hardships and sufferings which they underwent, and the risks and dangers to which they were exposed. This could only be done when there was intensive burning love in one's heart for his own people.

5. Power of Organization:

From his early youth when he came in contact with people of his age he showed his powers of organization whenever occasion arose. He first

demonstrated this when he came in contact with the students in his early college days. Then later, when he took up politics actively, his approach to the students and the formation of their organizations in different parts of India, was largely due to his inspiration and initiative.

He had the capacity to find out suitable persons who would be capable of fitting a position creditably. He never created a position to fit a person which is often found in many organizations, and particularly in party politics. He had also the capacity to approach people and make them co-operate with him, even though they differed from him in many matters. The basis of his organizing capacity was his sincerity and his frankness. He would rather quit a place where he did not succeed than try to hang on to it by devious and underground machination. This is well exemplified in his resigning the second Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in April, 1939 after the happenings at the Tripuri Congress meeting. His greatest achievement with regard to power of organization which showed his genius in this respect was his re-organization of the *Azad Hind Fauj* and of the Indian Independence League in S.-E. Asia. Although he did not undergo a regular military training, yet had picked up a great many things in this respect while he was in Germany. But the situation that he was confronted with in S.-E. Asia was wholly different and of a tremendous magnitude as compared to what had been in Germany relating to the Indian National Army formed there. His re-organization both of the *Azad Hind Fauj* and of the Indian Independence League, was successful, and satisfied everybody. He achieved this by his capacity (*i*) to find out (*a*) suitable persons who would do the necessary work, and (*b*) items which needed the greatest amount of attention; (*ii*) to concentrate all his energy and mind when tackling a problem, and (*iii*) to do hard mental and physical work. He not only issued orders and instructions for the carrying out of a thing, but he took pains to ensure and see that such orders and instructions were actually carried out in time. If there were lapses here and there, the fault did not lie in him, but it was due to the shortcomings of those on whom he relied.

6. Political Sagacity and Farsightedness:

(*i*) He had very carefully analysed the political progress of his country. It was evident to him that the first armed struggle which his countrymen had put up in 1857 failed largely because of the lack of two essential elements. Firstly, the lack of a central authority or a Provisional Government, to co-ordinate the activities of the different leaders in that revolution. The establishment of such a central authority or Provisional

Government impresses the enemy far more than when the struggle is carried out by a number of individual leaders. The enemy is likely to pay more respect and consideration to matters arising out of the struggle when he has to deal with a Provisional Government, than when he has to deal with individual leaders. Yet another advantage is that a Provisional Government can negotiate with another Government on different matters, such as help for Finance, Armament, Equipment, etc. And if it is recognized by other nations, it still more impresses the enemy against whom the fight for freedom has to be carried out. A still greater advantage is that the recognition of a Provisional Government by other nations gives it an international status, and its struggle for freedom comes out of the field of domestic dispute and passes on to the plane of international politics. Again, with such international recognition of the Provisional Government the spirit of its own people is greatly strengthened and they are impressed more and more of its significance. Further, if at some time of the struggle the forces of the Provisional Government are compelled to withdraw from its territory, it can pass on to another friendly territory from which it can direct its operations, and thus can continue the struggle for a much longer period. So, from every point of view in a struggle for freedom it is essential to form and establish a Provisional Government. The last function of a Provisional Government after the successful achievement of its object, that is, freedom of its country, would naturally be that it would help the nation to form and establish a permanent Government of their own choice and hand over to that Permanent Government, formed by its own people, all the functions and powers of the Provisional Government itself. It was because of these important considerations that our beloved leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose conceived the idea for the formation and establishment of the "Arzi Hukumate Azad Hind" (Provisional Government of Free India). It was this realization of the facts mentioned above which made him decide the establishment of a Provisional Government of Free India in the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia after taking up its leadership. During our struggle for freedom of our country in S.-E. Asia he consulted us about its formation and established the Provisional Government and formed his first Cabinet on the 21st of October, 1943. This was his masterstroke. This showed his sagacity in political matters.

(*ii*) Secondly, lack of support of the civilian population to the Army in 1857. Netaji saw this and it was this which impressed upon his mind the absolute necessity of mobilizing the civilian population fully with regard to men, money and material. He felt that unless the Army was supported

fully and completely by the civilian population, it could not continue to be a live body and successfully tide over long periods of war. He realised that it must be a total mobilization of all resources so that the Army received all the necessary help from the civilian population and rested on sound foundation. That is why he took such pains, and successfully organized and mobilized the civilian population. Actually 30,000 men were enlisted from the civilian members of the Indian population, but that number could have been easily trebled if the Japanese were able to find the arms and equipment for them. His appeal for total mobilization was indeed exceedingly successful.

He also saw the great mistake done by our fore-fathers in throwing away and surrendering the arms and equipment after the revolution of 1857. If these arms had not been thrown away, the struggle could have been carried on much longer, and the freedom of India could have been brought much nearer; but the surrender of arms reduced the population to abject slavery for a long long period.

(*iii*) He studied the re-birth of our freedom movement and its passing through various stages—stages of mere discussion and passing of resolutions, stages of appealing and petitioning, stages of revolutionary outbursts, though sporadic and localised, stages of repression and suppression, stages of non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience and stages of the open declaration of India's complete independence in 1929, stages of round table conferences, stages of further repression and suppression, incarceration of hundreds of thousands of men and women in British jails, sacrificing of hundreds of lives of Indian martyrs either at the gallows or in front of the firing of the police and the military, and finally the nation-wide support of the "Quit India" resolution openly declared by the Indian National Congress on August 8, 1942. He closely studied all these different stages, and it was evident to him that if the British yielded to any reforms, or repeal any tyrannical Acts they only yielded when there was the exhibition of violence, for example, those in connection with the Partition of Bengal and the Minto-Morley Reforms, those connected with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, etc. It has been said that these things have been coincidental, nevertheless the facts remain that they were so. It is a moot point that what would have been the political history of the country had these violent outbursts occurred. The British did not take kindly to our appeals and petitions. The British politicians of the Tory or Die-hard type, and the responsible I.C.S. bureaucracy in India, either laughed at and jeered at these appeals and petitions for grant-

ing civil liberties and political advancement, or treated them with utter contempt, and used most inhuman repressive measures when these appeals and petitions became very vocal and more widespread.

(*iv*) He felt a tremendous anguish when he saw the insults and degradation heaped on such a noble soul as Mahatma Gandhi who tried his utmost to bring about a peaceful emancipation of his people. It was the close study of these facts which forced him to realise that without a violent struggle either from within or from without, or both, the British will not yield to the demands of the people. He studied the history of the struggle for independence of countries beyond the borders of India, and nowhere could he find an instance where independence was obtained without an armed struggle. To the ruling powers appeals and petitions did not mean much. They appreciated armed strength and violence. In India also if the British Government had a different outlook, they had ample opportunity for listening to Mahatma Gandhi's appeals and petitions. If the British had listened to appeals and petitions right from the beginning, the political history of India, I am sure, would have been totally different. But they did not. Mahatma Gandhi was incarcerated in British jails time after time. His saintly life and his high moral and ethical plane in dealing with matters relating to the nation's welfare, meant nothing to them. They ridiculed him and jeered at him.

(*v*) Netaji showed his political acumen on many occasions, and the events that followed, proved his farsightedness and sagacity in political matters. Subhas Chandra Bose in 1928 had appealed to Gandhiji to start a Civil Disobedience Movement, but Mahatma Gandhi refused. Yet two years later, in 1930, Mahatmaji himself led the Civil Disobedience Movement. One of the remarkable events was his advice to the Congress High Command to allow the formation of a coalition ministry in Bengal and Assam on account of the peculiar circumstances prevailing in these two provinces, when the Act of 1935 was introduced. The refusal to accede to his request led to the tremendous deterioration of the political situation in both these provinces, particularly in Bengal. The mistake was realised later, but the mischief had already been done. Yet another instance could be quoted, namely, his request to the Congress High Command in 1939, for giving six months' ultimatum to the British to quit India. This again was not listened to at the time, but the Congress did pass the famous "Quit India" resolution three years later, on August 8, 1942. That the people were behind the spirit of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was amply manifested in the struggle that ensued after the great leaders had all been incarcerated in

jail. Again, during the Simla Conference in 1945, Netaji repeatedly broadcast from S.-E. Asia, and appealed to Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders of his country not to accept the proposal and fall into that trap which was nothing else but another version of Cripps' proposals of 1942. Another example of political foresight was his advocacy of the necessity of presenting India's case before the world. It was his considered opinion that India could not afford to let her case go by default, particularly when the British were so assiduously propagating information which was anti-Indian. According to Syed Hussain Sahib, such propaganda was very intensive and well-organized in the United States of America, where an enormous amount of money was being spent for the purpose. The world has become much smaller now. There is much more international contact now than before, and therefore all the more it is necessary that India should adopt a definite policy to put her case systematically before the world. No nation, particularly the bigger ones, could now afford to adopt an isolationist policy. It is evident from the experience of the world. The United States of America has given up her former purely negative attitude towards other nations and is actively taking part in world politics which are also shaping the world forces. The U.S.S.R. has also done the same. She has now definitely given up her former isolationist attitude. She has taken up a positive line of action and have perfected the technique of propaganda in international affairs. So, as long as we remain a slave nation, it will be all the more to our advantage if we could bring our case to the forum of international politics. It would greatly help our struggle for freedom. But if we deliberately neglect world opinion, we cannot get the advantage of the world forces—moral or material. Now that the United Nations Organization has been established, the necessity for creating a favourable world opinion towards India is still more evident. The wonderful effect of Srimati Vijaylakshmi Pundit's tour in the United States of America is well known. It was she who foiled the attempt of the British Imperialist to misrepresent India at the San Francisco Conference. A lot more still remains to be done. India is not yet free. Even when she is completely independent, she would have to partake in the affairs of the world. She can only do so efficiently if she keeps the world informed correctly about herself. Moreover, we must not imagine that even when we are independent there would be no one trying to undermine us or oppose us. We must not forget that this world does not consist of saints only. Correct information or knowledge is the basis of correct action.

(*vi*) Some people have criticised Netaji for taking foreign help for the liberation of his Motherland. But this is not justified. In most of the struggles for freedom that we see in the history of nations foreign help had been taken. This seeking of foreign intervention was nothing new. Did not the U.S.A. seek the help of France, and did not Lafayette contribute so largely towards the successful fight of the Americans for freeing their country from English subjugation? Did not Garibaldi seek the help of the British for the unification and liberation of his country from the yoke of Austria? Did not Ireland receive any quantity of help in the shape of money, armaments, and even men, from U.S.A. in her struggle for freedom from British domination? It is true that from the military point of view, in obtaining the objective, our campaign failed, but it has achieved some remarkable results:

I. MILITARY:

(*a*) It has demonstrated the capacity of Indians taking the initiative and organizing themselves militarily under circumstances which were difficult. They organized their own formations, units, and ancillary services, enacted their own military code and laws. prepared their words of command in Hindusthani, and prepared their own plans of operation and orders.

(*b*) It also showed that Indians could successfully command their people and win the respect of other nations in the field of battle.

(*c*) It showed that the Indian troops could undergo far more privations and sufferings, and fight far more intensively, when they are fighting for their own country, than when they are acting in a mercenery way.

II. POLITICAL:

(*a*) It aroused the political consciousness of the Indians in South-East Asia in a most remarkable manner. Where there was ignorance and apathy, it aroused the thirst for information and knowledge and remarkable enthusiasm and initiative.

(*b*) Before the Indian Independence Movement and the organization of the *Azad Hind Fauj*, the Indians had been looked down upon even by other Asiatic nations, but after the re-organization of these, the Indians' honour and prestige rose high in the eyes of other nations.

(*c*) It helped the Indians to live and trade freely in those parts which greatly enriched them economically.

(*d*) It intensively focussed world opinion on the political condition of our country and raised our national spirit and confidence to such an extent that the freedom of the people cannot be delayed any further. They have arrived at the threshold of independence, and one more concerted push will enable them to achieve their objective.

(*vii*) Netaji's straightforward and consistent policy with regard to the freedom of his country, is second to none or that of any other leader in its sincerity, determination, and appeal to the youth of India. His brilliant political acumen and sagacity has proved to be correct time after time. His patriotism and services to his country will be written in letters of gold in the future history of India.

"From his youthful days he was passionately devoted to the cause of Indian freedom and pursued his aim with uncommon zeal and single-mindedness.....His patriotism was beyond doubt."

—*Moulana Abul Kalam Azad*



Mr Ramkrishna of the Andamans talking to Netaji



Japanese Rear-Admiral saluting Netaji



Netaji entertaining Rear-Admiral of the Japanese Navy. L. to R. Mr. Shaw, Rear-Admiral, Netaji, A. M. Sahoy, Lt. Zenda (Jap Liaison officer)



Netaji delivering a speech, Andamans, 1943

MY REMINISCENCES OF THE I. N. A. & NETAJI

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On the 15th of February, 1942, the British forces in Singapore surrendered to the Japanese. It was one of the greatest disasters the British had suffered in their Military History. Over 90,000 British and Indian troops of which about 50,000 were Indian along with a vast booty of War materials, Motor Vehicles, Medical Equipment and Ration Stores were captured. It was a wind-fall for the Japanese. They used to refer to this vast booty as "Churchill Gift." One of the Japanese officers whom we met later used to say boastfully that when they entered the war they were prepared for a 10 Year War; but after the fall of Singapore they were now prepared for a 100 Year War. It was a vain boast but then they had not expected anything near to what they had actually got in Singapore.

Our feelings at the time of surrender were mixed. Some of us were frightened for our lives, some of use were happy that for them the War was over and there was no more danger to their lives either by bombing or by shelling; but most of us were indifferent. We just did not know what was coming ahead.

We had our grievances against the British, we had known the step-motherly treatment that was generally accorded to the Indian Officers in the Indian Army, we were conscious of our status as a subject nation but we had no notion of the coming events, not even a distant glimpse of them.

News had trickled down that one Captain Mohan Singh had raised a body of Indian troops and was co-operating with the Japs. The British used to refer to him as a renegade and a fifth columnist but we did not realise the full significance of Mohan Singh's actions until we came into contact with him, later on.

I was at that time commanding a Combined General Hospital where both Indian and British troops were treated. A couple of days after the fall of Singapore we received orders to separate the British and the Indian personnel. The former were sent to British P.O.W. Camps in Changi and the latter to Indian P.O.W. Camps in Neesoon and Bidadari. I went

along with the Indian section of my unit to Neesoon a place about 10 miles from the town of Singapore.

Here we found things in a chaos. There was terrible overcrowding. Food was insufficient and extremely deficient in vitamins, there was great scarcity of water supply, sanitary installations were conspicuous by their absence, medical arrangements were completely dislocated and medical equipment was extremely meagre. Naturally, as a result of all this, epidemic diseases specially dysentery became rampant and took a heavy toll of our men. Within a couple of months things improved a bit but the food situation in general continued to be bad, and there was an outbreak of food deficiency diseases like beri-beri and scurvy etc.

As the Japanese appeared to us

By this time the Japanese were scoring quick victories in nearly all places in South-East Asia. Burma had fallen, Java and Sumatra had been occupied by the Japs and the Philippines had succumbed to Jap armed might. The Japanese were quickly advancing towards Australia in the South and their armies were chasing the British Forces in northern and western Burma. We also had time to study the Japs during this interval. They were ruthless, cruel, unreliable and out and out imperialistic. Their slogan of "co-prosperity" meant only prosperity for themselves and their ideal of *Haka Ichh* (Universal Brotherhood) meant mastery for themselves, as they wanted to play the role of an elder brother in the Brotherhood of Nations. I was extremely disappointed in the Japanese. I had expected great things from them. We were proud that at least there was an Asiatic nation who could stand up to the white races. But we were disillusioned. We found them worse and what more, more greedy. Then we started thinking as to what would be the fate of our country if the Japs were to overrun it, and as facts stood then, they were going into India. Their officers used to come and tell us that there was a chance for us to fight for our independence and if we co-operated with them and fought shoulder to shoulder with them against the British, India would belong to Indians. Whereas, if we did not do this, they would go into India in any case and then India would be theirs. Such propaganda had its effect and many of us realised that if by raising an Indian National Army we could save the situation, we would do so.

Impulse behind 1st I. N. A.

At the same time we had also seen that on account of the Indian Independent Movement which had already been started under the guidance

and directions of Mr. Rash Behari Bose immediately after the outbreak of war in East Asia, the lives and properties of the Indians in Malaya and the honour of their women were safer than those of other communities in Malaya. We, therefore, realised that a movement based on sounder and stronger footing would greatly help the lot of Indians in the East Asia, and if an army was also to be raised under its auspices, it would not only strengthen the movement but would also show to the world that the Indians, when given proper opportunity, are prepared to fight for the liberation of their motherland from the foreign yoke. If we had not raised an I.N.A. the Indians residing in East Asia would have stood condemned today before the whole world. The world might have said that the Indians in East Asia when given full chances to work for their independence did not even raise a finger, what right have they to ask for the independence for their country? If we had not raised an I.N.A. we would have indirectly justified British domination of India, and I do not think there is a single true Indian living who would justify British rule in our country. These were some of the factors which led to the formation of the I.N.A. Whatever might have been the outward causes, the main factor which prompted us all to join this movement was the urge of a slave nation for freedom. This movement was merely an outward manifestation of an intense desire of an enslaved people to break off the chains of bondage and serfdom.

Why it was dissolved

Thus in June, 1942, a Conference of representatives of Indians from all over East Asia was held under the presidentship of Mr. Rash Behari Bose and it was decided there to raise an Indian National Army under the command of Captain Mohan Singh. The names of volunteers who wished to join the army were asked from amongst the Indian prisoners of war. About 35,000 officers and men volunteered for this, but since the strength of the first I.N.A. was about 16,000 only, all could not be absorbed and the remainder remained as surplus volunteers. Within a couple of months the I.N.A. was organised and it was officially inaugurated on the 1st of September, 1942, in Singapore under the command of General Mohan Singh. In those days there was very little contact between the officers and men of I.N.A. and the Indian civilians with the result that the civilian population looked upon the I.N.A. with a certain amount of suspicion. Donations from civilians were also not forthcoming. Relations between Mr. Rash Behari Bose and General Mohan Singh had gradually became estranged and Mohan Singh having got no help and support from the Japanese which

he had expected became dissatisfied with them. In a couple of informal talks with some of the Japanese high ranking Officers, he got the impression that they were not sincere and it was possible that we may be playing into their hands. We wanted certain assurances from the Japanese Cabinet which the local Japanese officers had even failed to convey to Tokyo. At the same time there were some internal dissensions in the I.N.A., and thus matters gradually reached ahead. Mohan Singh thus becoming thoroughly dissatisfied with the Japanese decided to disband the I.N.A. and accordingly issued orders for its dissolution. Mr. Rash Behari Bose who was President of the Indian Independence League did not agree with Mohan Singh's actions and removed him from the command of the I.N.A. The Japanese subsequently removed Mohan Singh to an unknown destination and kept him a prisoner there. About the same time Col. N. S. Gill, a senior I.N.A. officer, was also removed and imprisoned by the Japanese. All this created a lot of sensation among the officers and men of the I.N.A. and the first I.N.A. was thus dissolved.

Mr. Rash Behari Bose and the Japanese wanted that the I.N.A. should continue to function as before. Some of us felt disappointed after the dissolution of the first I.N.A. We thought that the factors which had prompted us to join first I.N.A. were still there and that its dissolution was perhaps a bit premature. However, we decided not to take a hasty step and if we did raise a new I.N.A., we would only do it if our demands were fully acceded to by the Japanese. We had fully realised that there was a great necessity of a leader who could tackle the Japanese in the diplomatic field on the one hand and who could at the same time give a sound lead to our movement on the other, and thus help restore confidence among the Indians, both in the civil and in the military, which was at that time badly shaken.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

We also knew that there was no one in East Asia at that time who could achieve that, and there was only one person who could steer our ship successfully at that stage and that was Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who was then residing in Germany. We accordingly asked the Japanese to request the German Government to send Netaji Bose to East Asia. We also made quite clear to the Japanese that unless they gave us satisfactory assurances about bringing Netaji from Germany we would not reform another I.N.A. Having got proper assurances we started reorganising the second I.N.A., and it was finally raised in the month of February, 1943, with Major-

General J. K. Bhonsle as Director, Military Bureau and Major-General M. Z. Kiani as Army Commander.

We continued to work and keep the movement going but our thoughts were largely centred on the arrival of Netaji. After a perilous and hazardous journey by a submarine he finally reached Penang and from there he flew to Tokyo. We heard about his arrival in East Asia only when we listened to his broadcast from Tokyo. It was in the month of June, 1943, and then early July we heard that Netaji was coming to Singapore. There was tremendous enthusiasm among all of us.

He arrived in the civil airport in Singapore on the morning of 2nd July where he was profusely garlanded and was received by senior I.N.A. officers and prominent Indian civilians. He looked a picture of health and he shook hands with all the persons. Outside the aerodrome a Guard of Honour of a contingent of the I.N.A. was presented to him and he took the salute. A couple of days later a representative gathering of Indians from all over East Asia was held in Cathay Buildings, and it was here amongst tremendous enthusiasm Netaji took over charge of the Presidentship of Indian Independence League in East Asia from Mr. Rash Behari Bose who introducing Netaji to the audience said that he had been away to Japan to bring this (pointing to Netaji) "present". He wished and prayed that India will attain full freedom under the leadership and guidance of Netaji Bose. That day Netaji spoke for well over an hour and he thanked the Indians in East Asia for their warm welcome. He gave us new hopes, he showed us a new life and he infused a new spirit. He told us that the first pre-requisite for the attainment of freedom was that we should consider ourselves free men and women and not think in terms of a subject people. He also hinted at the possibility of establishing a Provisional Government of Free India at an early date.

Azad Hind Fauz

On the 8th of July he inspected the I.N.A. and took the General Salute. It was this day that he addressed the I.N.A. as *Azad Hind Fauz* and from that day onwards we began to be known as such. It was this day he declared that our goal was Delhi and to hoist our Tri-colour Flag on the Red Fortress of Delhi, and gave us our slogan of "Chalo Delhi." He said that the road to Delhi was long tortuous and full of difficulties and it is possible that many of us would perish on the way, but still it was worth striving for. In return he did not show us any rosy gardens or made any empty promises, but gave us only blood, sweat and tears. He also said that those who are not

prepared to undergo sufferings and who felt diffident may still leave the army if they so wished. This was to be an army of volunteers only who were prepared to sacrifice their all and not demand anything in return. No one left the army and from that day onwards we entered a new phase. The whole movement was rejuvenated, and instead of slackness there was smartness everywhere. The civilians were prepared to give their all and the soldiers were prepared to die for their Netaji. In a public meeting which Netaji addressed on the evening of July 9, 1943, the enthusiasm in the public was unprecedented and lacs of dollars were contributed for the movement on the spot.

Thus the arrival of Netaji in Singapore brought a new life to our movement. He was the talk of the town. His magnetic personality had created a deep impression on the peoples of Singapore. Even the persons of other communities like Chinese, Malays, Eurasians used to ask us about our Netaji. In military uniform he looked a perfect General and amongst the non-Indians he was generally known as "General Bose." Netaji immediately after his arrival started a thorough inspection of every unit of the I.N.A., and when he was satisfied that the training of our men was up to the standard he gave orders for the movement of the A.H.F. to Burma. About this time Netaji also took over the Supreme Command of the A.H.F. and Major-General Bhonsle became his Chief of Staff.

Early in October I was asked to go to Burma to organise medical arrangements there. I was at that time commanding a Base General Hospital of the I.N.A. and my Unit was also ordered to proceed to Burma and open up a Hospital at Rangoon. We reached Rangoon after travelling for over a period of a month and a half. We travelled *via* the Chimpon, Kaohaji (Victoria Point), Mergui, and Moulmien route and covered the distance partly by train, partly by lorries and partly by ship, and a distance of about 200 miles was covered by foot. It was a difficult journey specially as most of the heavy baggages of the Hospital were also carried by our men, but not a single fellow ever grumbled, and they worked diligently and sincerely and every one gave his best.

Azad Hind Government Established

During this period many things had happened in Singapore. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind was established on October 21, 1943 and its first act was to declare war on Britain and America. This Government was subsequently recognised by no less than nine countries, and diplomatic relations were opened up with some of them and even envoys

were exchanged with a few. Thus in less than four months from his arrival from Germany, Netaji had not only rejuvenated the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia and reformed and reorganised the I.N.A. but he had also established the Provisional Government of Azad Hind.

By the end of December, 1943, I received orders to go back to Singapore where I was appointed A.D.M.S. and Director of Medical Training, A.H.F. On my way I stopped at Bangkok where I met Netaji who had just arrived from the Andamans after taking over charge of those islands from the Japanese. Major-General A. D. Loganadhan was appointed Chief Commissioner of these Islands and these Islands were re-named Shaheed and Swaraj Islands. Netaji was thinking of moving his headquarters from Singapore to Burma. He was anxious that the A.H.F. should take a prominent part in fighting the British. He, therefore, wanted to see the conditions of our troops in Burma and was going there.

Morale of the I. N. A.

I went back to Singapore, where I found great activity. Preparations were afoot for moving No. 1 Division to Rangoon, and No. 1 Regiment (Subhas Brigade) commanded by Major-General Shah Nawaz was already on its way to Rangoon. News was also trickling down from the front that some of our troops had already reached the forward areas. There were all kinds of obstacles and difficulties in the way. Our troops were extremely short of transport, they were insufficiently clothed and were poorly fed. Yet their morale was high. Each and every member of the force wanted to go forward. Even the sick and wounded when left behind in the Hospitals, but their units were moved up showed their desire to accompany the units and fight for the liberation of their motherland. I can recall several patients coming to me and bursting into tears because they were not allowed to go to the fighting areas. Such was the morale of our troops and every one worked at full swing and tried to put up his best. It was the spirit of Netaji that permeated every fabric of the Army and nobody appeared to be either slack or diffident.

The Arakan and Manipur Fronts

Then on the 4th of February, 1944, we heard that our troops had gone into action against the enemy in the Arakan sector. They did wonderfully well under the command of Colonel Misra and Colonel Rathuri and beat the enemy in many battles under heavy odds. Once a whole company of Abyssinian troops was routed by only a platoon of our men. It was after

this fight in the Arakan Front that the Japanese began to take us into confidence. Prior to this they had never taken us seriously, and instead of helping us used to put a lot of obstacles in our way.

Accordingly, in the fighting of the Imphal sector our troops played a very prominent part. They pushed the enemy back wherever they encountered him and subsequently crossed the border of India and entered the Indian soil where our tri-colour flag was unfurled on this liberated territory of our country. Major-General A. C. Chatterji was appointed Governor of the liberated territories.

Our armies along with those of our allies chased the British forces deep into the Manipur sector. Some of our troops reached Kohima and occupied that town. Some even reached Dimapore. The Fortress of Imphal was surrounded and all communications and approaches to this town were cut except the air route. Our troops in spite of living on half rations, tried and exhausted, showed high morale and were prepared to undergo any amount of suffering. Then suddenly the Japanese withdrew their air support. They diverted it to their homeland. Still our troops fought on doggedly and bravely and retained their ground. The enemy during this period reinforced the garrison in Imphal by air, yet we were confident and we thought that the fall of Imphal was only a matter of a couple of days. Preliminary preparations had also been made all over East Asia for celebrating the fall of Imphal. And then came the bolt from the blue. Rains, heavy rains, torrential rains started one month before their scheduled time. Our communication lines were cut. No rations could reach our troops, but still they fought bravely and gave their lives on the battlefield with the name of Netaji on their lips. And then their ammunitions were exhausted. Their guns stopped firing, machine guns stopped the tut-tut-tut sound and even the rifle fire became feeble and sporadic, yet these men wanted to fight with bayonets. At that time our commanders realising the futility of fighting gave orders much against their will for retreat. Our troops wept. They preferred death to retreat. Still there was no way and they had to retreat. It was a tragic spectacle to see these starved, naked, wounded heroes going back. They looked like dead but there was a fire in their eyes and a determination to get back where they had left.

The Imphal campaign ended in a tragic failure for us, but it had a great educative value both for our commanders and our men and they all felt confident of beating the enemy in the next encounter. The morale of the army was high, but the civilians in East Asia in general and in Malaya in particular felt disheartened and their morale was not so good as before.

AFTER RETREAT FROM MANIPUR

Netaji then made a whirlwind tour of Malaya and appealed for more men, more money and more material. He said that in freeing four hundred million people from foreign domination even if three million Indians in East Asia became paupers, it was not a big sacrifice. His message to the people was for a supreme sacrifice at the altar of freedom. People willingly came forward and gave generously. The poor gave more in proportion to their wealth than the rich. But in certain instances some of the rich really gave their all. One Muslim business magnate of Rangoon by name Habibur Rahman donated over a crore worth of property—jewellery and cash, and became a pauper. He was the first recipient of *Sewak-e-Hind* medal. Mrs. Betai, a Gujrati lady also contributed all her property worth over three million rupees, and many other big Seths also gave liberally. The confidence of the people which was shaken after the set-back at Imphal was quickly restored.

The expansion programme of the Army was in full swing and No. 2 and No. 3 Divisions of the *Azad Hind Fauz* which had already been raised were being given intensive training. At this time in order to cope with the shortage of medical officers, I started a Medical School at Singapore. Here Medical Assistants and Nurses received their medical training. These medical assistants after qualification from the school were posted as Unit Medical Officers and could be usefully employed as Junior Medical Officers. This scheme of training these medical assistants proved a great success and in two years' time we were able to train about 120 candidates.

Suitable girls from the Rani Jhansi Regiment also received training in nursing and they proved to be very useful nurses both in the forward areas and in Base Hospitals. The Rani Jhansi Regiment had already been raised under the command of Lt.-Col. Laxmi, and in less than three months there were over five hundred girls in this Regiment. They received military training on the lines of infantry soldiers and became quite proficient in their work in course of a short time.

Later on the No. 2 Division of A.H.F. moved to Burma and from there it moved to the forward areas. Our units were reorganised and Netaji himself, in face of great danger, inspected these units in front line. More than once he narrowly escaped death, and on one occasion near Myktila he was very nearly trapped by the enemy. But our men fighting heroically rescued him.

Netaji visited Singapore in January, 1945. At that time the food situation in Malaya in general and in Singapore in particular was very bad,

An epidemic of beri-beri had broken out among our troops and it was impossible to give even the requisite quantity of pulses (*dal*) to them. Netaji sanctioned large sums of money to purchase *dal* and other articles of food and in a short while the epidemic was brought under control. In those days the prices of commodities had soared very high. Eggs were sold at about ten dollars per egg, milk was about fifty dollars per seer so that it was impossible to get these things even for patients. Netaji appealed to the Indian *Goalas* of Singapore to give milk for the I.N.A. patients. They responded generously and they supplied up to 50 seers of milk a day free of cost to our patients.

Although Netaji was busy in multifarious activities in Singapore at that time, one could see that his heart was at Burma. The world situation had deteriorated considerably. Germany was on her last legs and Japan was also suffering defeat after defeat. Still Netaji hoped for the best and his optimism carried his people with him.

In Burma, however, things were shaping differently. The Japanese were pushed back in the Arakan sector and Akyab had fallen. Even in the north the Japanese got severe reverses and our troops had to fall back, although now and then they gave a severe knocking to the enemy. The chief reason for this continuous retreat was again the lack and absence of air support. The Japanese could not spare any planes for Burma, now that their homeland was in danger.

About this time the news from the front was scarce and we in Singapore were getting very anxious about the fate of our troops in Burma. Then suddenly Germany collapsed and about the same time the Burmese Defence Forces who were protecting a sector along with the Japanese went over to the British Forces, thus leaving a whole flank open for the advance of the enemy motorised columns. On May 3, Rangoon fell and most of our troops in Burma under the Command of Major-General Loganadhan were captured by the British.

We heard all this in Singapore but still there was no news of Netaji. Wild rumours were afloat which perturbed us much more. We felt like a ship in a stormy sea without a captain. We repeatedly asked the Japanese about the welfare of Netaji, but they kept mum. Then after a period of about a month we heard that Netaji was in Bangkok. Gradually the story of his escape along with some of our officers and men came to light. Netaji had refused to leave Rangoon when its fall was imminent. He refused to avail of the services of a Japanese plane which was placed at his disposal to escape from Burma.

At the last moment at the persuasion of his Ministers and high ranking officers he agreed to leave Burma but insisted that all the members of the Rani Jhansi Regiment must accompany him. He was like a father to every girl of the Regiment and he felt it his moral duty to take them with him. The Japanese failed to provide transport for them and the enemy was fast approaching Rangoon. The Japanese troops had already evacuated Rangoon and law and order was only maintained by the troops of *Azad Hind Fauz*. When the Japanese saw that it was not possible to take Netaji from Rangoon alone they provided transport for the Rani Jhansi Regiment girls, and then the party finally left Rangoon. When they passed Pegu they could hear the firing of enemy guns in the distant. And if they had been late by a few hours, they would have certainly been captured there.

Netaji shared all hardships with his men and walked the whole distance up to Moulmien and from there the party went to Bangkok by train.

About the middle of June, 1945 Netaji arrived in Singapore and this time I had a great opportunity of coming into closer contact with him. He was at that time not keeping well and I was attending him as physician.

NETAJI'S ROUTINE WORK

In spite of his ill health he continued to work hard. Sixteen to eighteen hours was his normal routine work. He would return after a heavy day's programme about nine in the evening when the day's press reports and radio news would be placed before him. And if he saw anything worth replying immediately, he would send for the stenotypist and dictate his speech. Then he would change and take his meals, and perhaps attended some urgent work quite forgetting about the radio programme. Then suddenly one of his A.D.C.s would go and remind him of his radio programme. Netaji would then ask the stenotypist for the typed copies of his speech and would rush to the radio station in his car reaching there about a minute before his speech was due. And, I have seen it myself that as he was speaking over the radio, he would be correcting the type-written sheets, because he had no time to see them before. Millions of listeners both in India and abroad must have heard him and appreciated his speeches, but that is how he used to prepare them. He was an intellectual giant and when I told him that his system needed rest he would quietly smile and say that periodic intense activity did him a lot of good and he felt ever so much better; but here it was not a question of periodicity it was almost a continuous programme, and when I referred

this to him he just laughed and said: "don't worry about me I have got a much tougher constitution than most people think I have." And I think he was right.

I have seen his A.D.C.s strong, stalwart, sincere persons getting absolutely tired, keeping up long hours along with Netaji, and then Netaji realising that they were overdoing would ask them not to wait for him, or even suggested to them to take a holiday.

Netaji was a very kind-hearted person and I have never seen him using harsh words to anybody except on one occasion when after he had finished addressing a public meeting, a young lad of about sixteen years rushed to his dias and wanted his autograph. Netaji shouted at him and said, "You should be ahamed of yourself. Instead of collecting these autographs you should be fighting for your country. It was girls' job collecting autographs and even they were better as they are ready to fight for their motherland." He refused to sign the autograph. The boy was very much ashamed and I heard later that he joined a training camp as a recruit.

JAPAN SURRENDERS

The war situation had gradually deteriorated. American planes were hammering the Japanese main land and had a complete mastery of the air and sea in the Pacific. B-29's also visited Singapore regularly and we knew the eventful outcome of the war; but the Japanese land forces were still prepared to fight and die and the morale of our troops with Netaji at their head was high. We knew that before we went down we would give a good account of ourselves and then came the Atom Bomb which upset all calculations and the entry of Russia in the war against Japan precipitated Japanese downfall.

Just before the surrender of Japan on August 15, 1945, I was one day talking to Netaji as to what would be our eventual fate. He replied, provided 50 per cent of his A.H.F. troops remained sincere to the cause, this movement will gather further strength in the country as the real facts would come to light to the Indians in India and in the long run a great majority would come out scott-free. As subsequent events showed his words were prophetic. 99 per cent of the A.H.F. troops have stood up for the cause they fought for and practically every member of the I.N.A. is now free.

On the morning of the 16th of August, Netaji left Singapore in a plane along with Colonel Habibar Rahman. On the 5th of September, 1945, the British came to Singapore and we were made prisoners.

NETAJI'S PERSONALITY

Netaji was a great personality. He cannot be compared to any single person in the long Indian history. In statesmanship, administrative ability, and catholicity of views he was like Akbar. In leadership and as a military genius he was like Shivaji. Morally, spiritually and intellectually he was a giant like Swami Vivekananda. If you combine these three personalities into one, you may get a near approach to our Netaji.

THE I. N. A.

The I.N.A. itself was a poor army. It was an army which was largely run by voluntary contributions of fellow compatriots. It was poorly equipped, insufficiently clothed and poorly fed. It had deficiencies of Arms, Ammunitions, Medical supplies etc. and yet it had its redeeming factors. One was its leader Netaji whose inspiring spirit had permeated every fabric of the *Fauz* and the other was the righteousness of our cause. These two factors more than compensated our deficiencies, and in the battlefield our men fought bravely and heroically and each man considered himself equal to ten on the opposite side.

Whatever the I.N.A. may have achieved or failed to achieve it has at least established two things beyond doubt. First, that we Indians are capable of fighting under our own leadership for the attainment of our freedom and we will do so in future if freedom is delayed any longer, and secondly, we Indians, irrespective of the fact to what community we may belong to, are one. In the eyes of Netaji there was no Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian. He considered us all as Indians first and last. We remained in East Asia as one under the most trying conditions. I do not see why we cannot remain as one in a free and united India where there will be a full scope for every talent, and plenty for every individual.

Jai Hind

"Well, I have given you Subhas, the best of my jewels wait and you will have everything."

—*Deshabandhu to his Countrymen*

INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY
First Phase 1942

By NARANJAN SINGH GILL

Indian Army

The Indian Army formed by British was and is a mercenary body. We joined it for purely personal reasons, to make a living. It had no ideals. It was commanded by the British, its task was to defend British interests, and at their orders. It was in fact a huge 'fifth column' body. Long before mankind had coined the words 'Quislings' and 'Fifth Columnists', Imperial Powers had learnt the art of subjugating other races by bribing citizens of enslaved nations in the form of pay, grants, titles etc. Britain, of course, perfected that system in India. Such an army mis-named Indian Army I joined after graduating from the Royal Military College, SANDHURST, ENGLAND, in 1925 as a 2nd Lieut. The nature of this article does not permit me to give a detailed account of the Indian Army's life which would show the correctness of the foregoing remarks. So a few words will be enough. Love of India, respect for the Indian National Congress and our National leaders were considered crimes for the Indian Army personnel. We saluted the Union Jack, the flag of a foreign nation. The King of England was made our Emperor. Twice, once in 1926 at Secunderabad and once at Benares in 1930, the mere mention of Mahatma Gandhi's name respectfully in the officers mess, nearly caused my discharge from the army. Thus it was purely a hired army, lacking all the essential moral foundations described in the words of Nepoleon, 'the moral is to the physical as three is to one.' Such armies will never stand a test. This is exactly what happened in 1942 during the Malayan war and after the fall of Singapore when the so-called Indian Army shook off its falsehood and ripened into the I.N.A.

I. N. A. Foundation 1942

The middle of February, 1942, was indeed historic. On the 14th Singapore, the mighty citadel of the British, surrendered unconditionally. On the 16th over 40,000 Indian officers and soldiers gathered at Farrer Park in the middle of Singapore in accordance with the surrender terms. We were to be handed by the British to the Japanese as prisoners of war. Among those gathered were all the officers who were to later organize and lead the I.N.A.



Netaji taking the salute of marching troops in Singapore. Maj Gen M Z Kiani is on the left of Netaji



Gandhiji listening to the National Anthem sung by the I. N. A. officers—L. to R.—Col. R. M. Arshad, Col. Habibur Rahman, Col. Kasliwal, Col. J. G. Kiani and Capt. Ram Singh with violin



There were many whom I knew, such as Mohan Singh, Bhonsle, Kiani, Sehgal, and others I had not met yet, such as Chatterji, Shah Nawaz, Dhilon etc. I as the seniormost combatant officer had a great responsibility. This 16th was the day on which Lt.-Col. Hunt, representing the British Government, shamefully handed us all to the Japanese. They could have insisted on us being treated in accordance with the international law. But what cared they now that they had made use of us, thousands being dead, wounded or maimed. We were handed over as mere goods as no body's babies, and the British were to pay for this on the battlefields of Imphal. Even more amazing on this memorable day was the ovation given to Capt. Mohan Singh's anti-British speech. Except a few gruntled faces among the officers he was cheered to a man. Nothing else was to be expected, since our ties with the British were based on selfishness, personal gains and greed, whereas an army must be based on the love of one's country, honour of one's own flag, defence of one's own countrymen. Let the powers to come learn this lesson once for all from the I.N.A.

The change in our mental outlook was now rapid. It was easy for nearly all of us to become anti-British, to think and act against aliens who had so long kept our country in bondage. Soon I was busy in talks with Capt. Mohan Singh and the Japanese representatives. Towards the end of February, I proceeded to Saigon, the headquarters of the Japanese Southern army, for talks with Field Marshal Terauchi, the C.-in-C. and his staff. In March a conference was held at Tokyo. Representatives came from Malaya, Thailand, China. The Army was represented by Capt. Mohan Singh and myself. Together with Mr. Rash Behari Bose and Mr. A. M. Sahay we met the Japanese Government including Premier Tojo. Here we decided to organize an I.N.A. and an Indian Independence League throughout East Asia. On return to Singapore we held a Conference of all the Indian officers and confirmed our earnest desire to strike for the freedom of India. A very much larger conference was then held at Bangkok in July. Two hundred civilian representatives from all countries in East Asia and over fifty officers attended. Mr. Rash Behari Bose became the president of a Council of Action, whose members were Mohan Singh, Menon, Raghvan and Gilani. Capt. Mohan Singh was confirmed G.O.C. of the I.N.A. Thereafter, we rapidly organized the I.N.A. and from the 1st September it came physically into being. Within two months a force of 40,000 was made ready. By the end of November an advance party had reached Rangoon. I myself conducted operations in Burma. Forward posts were formed near the Indian frontier in Akyab and Imphal areas. Patrols actually filtered into India. Thus we were

set for a push into India and we well knew that the British forces were totally unprepared, and there was nothing to prevent us from entering India and creating a revolution.

Unfortunately (or may be fortunately) we now faced many difficulties. The Japanese appeared to be unprepared for an immediate push into India. Then there was the question of Fascist Powers against the Allies. The people of India though in deadly earnest to fight the British were pro-Russia and pro-China. To fight alongside the Japanese meant fighting against Russia and China. Even then we were prepared to fight providing (*a*) we had a strong force of our own and (*b*) the Japanese were sincere towards India. Both of these conditions were lacking. The Japanese armed 15,000 of our soldiers lightly and hesitated to arm more even though the arms were available. Further, their treatment and official answers to our requests were totally unsatisfactory. One example will suffice. We had lent the Japanese 1,000 of our Anti-Aircraft gunners. After a short while we were not even allowed to see them. We got information that they were being organized as part of the Jap army and were made to pay allegiance to the Japanese Emperor. This was sheer nonsense and we could not tolerate such events. There was little doubt that the Japanese wanted to dominate us and use us as they wanted. We solidly refused to be treated. We then gave an ultimatum more or less that unless they yielded to our reasonable and honourable demands, we will cease our co-operation. It was for our country that we were going to fight and for nobody else, though we will fully repay and reciprocate the help given to us. Our main demands were...

(1) Recognize and proclaim the I. N. A.
(2) I.N.A. to be an independent army.
(3) Declare the Independence of India.
(4) All Indians and Indian property in East Asia was ours.

This was a unanimous decision. Their answer, a typical Fascist answer, was my arrest at 4 a.m., 8th December, 1942. On this our Council of Action resigned. The Japanese still finding us strong and determined then arrested General Mohan Singh on the 22nd December and the first I.N.A. stood dissolved. The purpose of our honourable stand, however, was fully fulfilled. Although General Mohan Singh and myself thereafter remained in prison throughout, the Japanese realized that the Indians will not be their tools. They were forced to bring Shri Subhas Ji from Germany, (a wonderful adventure in itself) giving him all that we had pre-

viously asked and more. Thereafter, the raising of the I. N. A. again, the formation of Azad Hind Government, the fighting on the Imphal front, the Red Fort trials are matters of history and common knowledge.

I. N. A. Phases

So the I.N.A. has had two phases, two currents of the Mother Ganges; foundation and preparation including trial. Without the first the second would not have come into being, and without the second the first would have been valueless. The third phase has still to come, we all hope peacefully; but come it must, no matter how, and in this phase every Indian will end up as a member of the AZAD HIND FAUZ.

The I.N.A. has carried out the following tasks:—

(1) Saved the honour and property of Indians in East Asia.
(2) Created unity so that we became Indians first and last.
(3) Has struck a vital blow for the freedom of India.

So, let me in conclusion appeal to all Indians to immediately take unity *viz.* (2) to heart so that No. (3) above *viz.* complete independence may come in at the earliest; and our dream of a final victory march in Delhi, the hoisting of the tricolour over the Red Fort and the greetings of *Jai Hind* in the Viceregal Lodge may come true, and that the earliest moment. Then MOTHER INDIA may stand up again to give guidance and solace to mankind and civilization as she did in the ages past.

Long live freedom. Long live INDIA.

"There was nothing that he did not sacrifice in the struggle for freedom.".

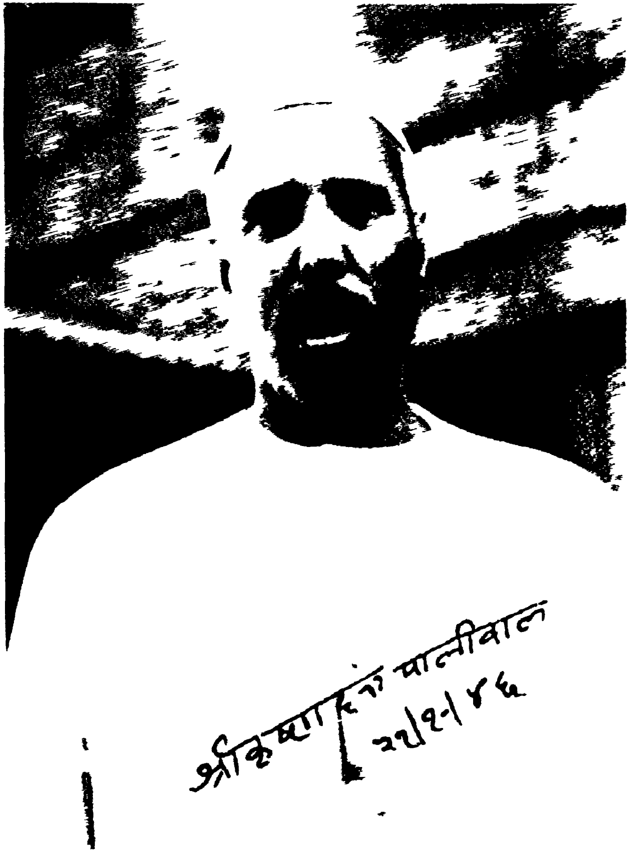
—*Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*

THE RANI OF JHANSI REGIMENT

By LAKSHMI SWAMINADHAN, *Lt.-Col., Azad Hind Fauz*

Origin

Till the advent of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia, the idea of women taking any active part in the Indian Independence Movement was dismissed as quite impracticable and impossible—Indian women, labouring as they had been for centuries under age-worn customs, traditions and superstitions, were regarded as incapable of playing any part in such an important, vital and far-reaching political and military struggle. Prior to the outbreak of the war in East Asia, even the Indian men in East Asia were politically very backward, being concerned only with the all-important problem of earning their daily bread, that being the only motive which prompted the ill-paid rubber estate labourer and the rich merchant to leave his motherland, for this distant shore. Although it was practically overnight that these very men changed from being mere bread-winners and beasts of burden into politically-conscious men, ready to do their bit for the winning of their country's freedom, it was felt that their women-folk who were so cut off from the modern world and its problems, would not be able to make any contribution to the coming struggle. Another factor which made Indians wary of allowing their women to enter into public life was the presence of the Japanese. The indifferent and almost contemptuous attitude of the Japanese towards women, except as wives and mothers, was very well-known. Indian women, however, had been spared the painful and humiliating experience of witnessing this side of the Japanese nature due to the very sheltered and secluded lives they led, and it was felt that if they left the privacy of their homes to enter into public life, they might be laying themselves open to insult from the Japanese. But no mass movement can ever succeed if one entire section of the community remains outside it. Even the first President of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia, Sri Rash Behari Bose realized this. Therefore, when he reorganized the movement early in 1943 after the crisis in the I.N.A. and the Council of Action, he stressed the need for women joining the movement. He, however, only visualized women as playing the role of nurses in I.N.A. hospitals and also doing relief-work among the sick and the destitute. Even this, however was definitely a step forward and women very readily responded to it. As for



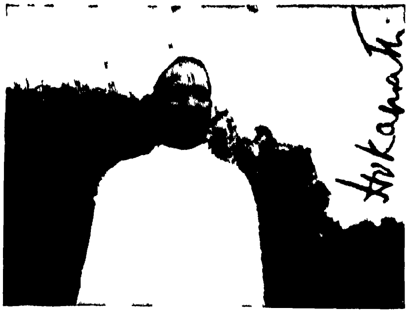
Shri Krishna Dutt Paliwal



Major Lakshmi Swami Nadhan (Now Mrs P K Sehgal) of the Jhansi Rani Regiment fame



Mrs Sarojini Naidu



Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath



Tokyo Cadets under training in Japan

the fear of the Japanese—that was entirely groundless. As long as there were Indians—men and women ready to protect their honour and self-respect unto death, it was foolish to imagine that anyone could dishonour them. It is a well-known fact that the bully only teases those who are weak and show their fear of him. He never touches those who dare stand up to him.

NETAJI'S ARRIVAL CHANGES ALL THIS

With the arrival of Netaji in Singapore on the 2nd of July, 1943, the whole movement underwent a dynamic change. From the moment he arrived, the whole atmosphere was as if charged with electricity. Just before his arrival a stalemate had set in. There was intense distrust, almost amounting to hatred of the Japanese. And even worse than this was the lack of confidence directed against the leaders who in spite of their integrity and honesty lacked political experience. Even Rash Behari Bose, with all his revolutionary past and well-known anti-British attitude, was perhaps not powerful enough to stand against the Japanese militarists. Everyone drifted along with no heart in what they were doing. Actually, the whole movement might have been called off but for the hope that soon there would come a leader whom they could trust implicitly. And no one was disappointed when he did come. With one look at the forceful and magnetic personality of Netaji all doubts were dispelled for ever. Here at last was a leader in whom one could place implicit trust and confidence. Even the proud and haughty Japanese showed him the honour and respect which they had till then shown to no other leader. Above everything else the fact which made every Indian convinced in his absolute sincerity and integrity was his frankness and singleness of purpose. From the start he openly declared that while taking help from Japan, he in no way subscribed to the Fascist doctrine of Japan, and that a Free India would have no hesitation in fighting her erstwhile ally, if that ally showed even the slightest sign of exploiting India. The Japanese realized that these were no empty threats, and that this man who had already risked his life a thousand times, would with the same determination and fearlessness risk all, rather than see his beloved motherland freed from one Imperialism to fall a prey to another. Above all, they realized that here was a man who could make millions fight for him and die for him.

TOTAL MOBILIZATION

On arrival, Netaji's call was for total mobilization of manpower, materials and money. He made it clear that this was to be no half-hearted

attempt, and the I.N.A. or *Azad Hind Fauz* was to be no puppet or token army. It was to be a mass movement of the 3 million Indians in East Asia, a movement in which every man, woman and child contributed their utmost. The I.N.A. was to be a powerful army, every member of which from the highest ranking officer to the sepoy was pledged to fight for the achievement of the complete independence of India or to perish in the attempt. The army was to be a completely independent one and would be given the rights, privileges and status given to any allied army. The entire movement was to be financed and supported by rich Indians in East Asia, and it was only after all Indian resources had been completely tapped that the Japanese would be approached for help if necessary. Finally, he asked for what was at that time considered to be an impossible and impracticable thing. That was the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. A Regiment composed entirely of women, to be trained as combatants, and when the opportunity came to go forth into the field of battle as did the noble Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, in India's First War of Independence in 1857. And it was not in vain that Netaji made this appeal. He. probably more than any other leader, knew the staff of which Indian women are made. He knew how deeply they felt and resented the chains of slavery, which in their case were doubly strong being social as well as political. Domination over India by a foreign Power had prevented her steady progress and had kept alive all her antiquated social customs which affected her women more than her men. Therefore, when given the chance, Netaji, knew that women would come forward readily, eager to share the burden and to fight shoulder to shoulder with their brothers, husbands, sons and fathers for the freedom of their motherland. Thus it was that Netaji's dream became a reality. Young Indian women from all parts of East Asia beseiged the recruitment centres and volunteered for service in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. Often they came in the face of stiff parental and family opposition. But since the Leader himself had sponsored this idea, public opinion which had hitherto been against women participating so actively in the struggle, changed, as the faith in the Leader was so great and so complete. Whatever he did was done because he had a very good reason for doing so and in the interest of the whole nation. It was never Netaji's intention that the Rani of Jhansi Regiment should be used as a weapon of propaganda. He made it clear that those who joined the Regiment must do so fully prepared to face the dangers and terrors of the battlefield. If they desired freedom, it was but right that they should be prepared to fight for it, and to die for it. Besides, they were doing nothing new or unique. Indian history provided many brilliant examples of women

riding into the field of battle not out of any blood-thirsty motive but to defend the honour of their country. So also in the Peoples Armies of China and Russia—every being, irrespective of sex, took up arms to drive out the invader.

Rani of Jhansi Regiment Founded

On the 21st of October, 1943, just three and a half months after Netaji had taken over the leadership of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment Training Camps were started simultaneously in Singapore and Rangoon. Even this delay would not have taken place, but for the obstructive attitude of the Japanese. To them this idea of a Women's Regiment was something quite unimaginable, and they could not realize for quite sometimes that Netaji was serious. They were quite prepared to see women nurses work in hospitals—in fact all their hospitals were staffed by women nurses. In their rear headquarters they often employed women clerks and stenographers. But a Women's Regiment, that went against their entire military tradition! They, therefore, created all kinds of obstacles in the way of obtaining suitable camp sites and training grounds. Netaji, however, would brook no such interference, and took up the matter with the highest military authorities on the spot, and was even prepared to go to further lengths. This ultimately convinced the Japanese and they gave in. The day on which the camp was first opened proved to be doubly auspicious. On the one hand, it was the day on which the patron of the regiment, Rani Lakshmi Bai, had been born, and on the other hand, it was the day on which Netaji formed the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. In Singapore Netaji himself declared the camp open and he was on that day provided with a guard of honour consisting of young women smartly clad in Khaki uniforms. The presence of this small detachment who had been undergoing part-time military training for two months previous to the opening of the camp, dispelled once and for all any doubts which the cynical had cherished, as to the Rani of Jhansi Regiment ever becoming a reality. In Singapore, the first detachment of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which, to begin with, consisted of one company only, started training on the 23rd of October, 1943. Although as regards military training everyone started from scratch, due to differences in educational qualifications, some sort of division into future officers, N.-C.Os and sepoys, was possible and accordingly the girls were divided into sections and platoons. The majority of the volunteers consisted of the daughters, sisters and wives of petty tradesmen, estate workers and men of the lower middle class. Most of these

young women had been denied the benefits of education due to economic and social conditions, and were barely literate in their mother tongues. Hitherto their lives had been confined to within the four walls of their homes, and life had little to offer them outside the drudgery of household duties. Yet, overnight they were able to cast off their shackles and enter into a completely new life. A life of which they knew absolutely nothing of. Yet their very ignorance and simplicity made them put complete trust in Netaji. Never for a moment did they doubt the wisdom of his words, and even later when bitter defeat overtook them, they never once faltered or regretted the step they had taken. To them it was a new life, for it meant not merely an escape from their monotonous lives, but a life with a purpose. At last, they had something to live for, and if necessary to die for. In addition to these, there were also a number of young women from comfortable homes, who in the normal course would also have not found any very great purpose in life. In spite of their education they would eventually have had to settle down to lives of placid domesticity. But even they did not come in any light-hearted spirit of adventure. They came, fully realizing the magnitude of the step they were taking, and determined to give their all to the service of the motherland. Among these young women who came forward with such spirit and devotion the majority had never even seen the motherland for whose liberation they were ready to lay down their lives. And yet they were Indians to the core; Indians who in distant lands had been able to forget all differences of caste and creed; Indians who had been shamefully exploited and had no redress for their grievances; and above all Indians who knew that unless the motherland was free, there was no hope of a fair deal for her nationals abroad.

Training the Regiment

The Rani of Jhansi Regiment Training Camp was run on strict military lines, perfect discipline being maintained from the very start. All the work of cooking, cleaning, etc., was done by the volunteers themselves. Weekly duties were assigned so that the work was shared equally by everybody. There were some elderly women who volunteered as camp cooks, and these women too, at their own instance, took part in Physical Training, Route March etc. Some of the more enthusiastic of them even learnt to handle rifles expertly. They were prepared to move to the front and always carried rifles, as they said they did not want to be caught unawares by the enemy. The training was given by a detachment of Officers and N.-C.O's who had been specially selected from crack of Infantry Regiments of the *Azad Hind Fauz.*

From its very inception, the officers and men of the *Fauz* had co-operated in every way possible and saw to it that the members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment were given the best training possible. The instructors especially took great pride in their work, and saw to it that the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was turned out as smartly and efficiently as any crack Infantry Regiment. It was really inspiring to see the way in which these war-toughened veterans who had learnt their soldiering the hard and bitter way, patiently put the girls through their paces. Many of the volunteers were clumsy and could hardly tell their left leg from their right one. Many were slow and dull. But they all, instructors and pupils alike, shared one feeling, and that was the intense pride of having the proud privilege and race honour of being soldiers in Netaji's Army of Liberation, and they were determined at all costs to uphold the honour of that Army.

The training commenced at 6 A.M. every morning with the hoisting of the National Tri-colour, at which every member of the camp was present, ready for the day's work. Then followed physical training from 6-15 to 7 A.M. Breakfast at 7-30 A.M., and at 8 A.M. everyone was on the parade ground. The next two hours were spent in military training consisting of squad drill, and training in the handling and maintaining of arms. After two hours of strenuous training the next two hours were spent in leisure, when the volunteers were free to do their own washing and cleaning. After lunch at 12 noon there was another half hour leisure, followed by two hours of class-room work. In the first hour Romanized Hindustani was taught. This was most essential as Hindustani was the official language of the I.N.A. and all words of command and orders were given in Hindustani. To avoid the controversy that raged regarding the use of Urdu and Hindi script, the Roman script was adopted and proved to be most practicable and easy. It was Netaji's desire that in India too ultimatly the uniform Roman script would be adopted, as this had two great advantages. On the one side, it would go a long way towards creating national unity, and secondly, would help in the study of European languages which would be essential when once India took her place in the international sphere, as a free country. The majority of the volunteers in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment as well as the civilian recruits in the I.N.A. were South Indians who hitherto had absolutely no knowledge of Hindustani. Yet within the short space of three months, they all had a working knowledge of the language and some of the officers and N.-C.O.'s were even able to give instructions in that tongue. The other hour of the class-room period was utilized on lectures on the Geography and the Political History of India.

All the British Text-Book facts of the advantage of British Rule in India were exposed and a true picture of the exploitation of India by British Imperialism was made known. The true story of the 1857 struggle was taught, and last but not least, the rise and growth of the Indian National Congress were made familiar to all the volunteers. Later on, an N.C.O.'s Cadre course was started and the theoretical side of military training, with subject like Map-Reading, Strategy, Tactics, etc., was taught.

The two hours of class work was followed by two more hours of outdoor training. The day ended with the roll call, bringing down of the flag and the National Anthem. Dinner was at 7 P.M. and after that an hour was spent on friendly discussion, talks on current events or in music. Although for the purpose of maintaining discipline there was the division into Officers, N.-C.O.'s and Sepoys, these divisions were not so apparent, because of the spirit of comradeship and fellow-feeling that existed. It was a most unique experience for so many women to live together. Not as in women's hostels where all the members are of the same social status with similarity of ideas and outlook, but for such a varied lot. They were, however, bound by the common spirit of service and self-sacrifice, united by the same ideal and inspired by the same leader.

Once the mysteries of squad drill and the handling of small arms were conquered, the outdoor work consisted more in Route Marches. and preparing and executing schemes of attack and defences, guerilla tactics, night marches, etc. These exercises were most interesting and it was in this form of training that hidden talent came to light. One fact became quite apparent, and that was, soldiering was mainly solid common sense and presence of mind. The physical strain which seemed enormous at first, gradually became almost imperceptible as muscles grew tough and the system got used to and even relished the regular hours of exercise and rest, and the simple but wholesome food.

Although the Rani of Jhansi Regiment only began as a detachment, one company strong, everyday new recruits joined until finally there were one thousand trained women soldiers. No doubt this is a microscopic figure judging by the standards of modern armies, but out of a total Indian population of 3 millions and considering the conditions under which it was raised, it is no mean achievement. In addition to the combatants, there was also a very fine Nursing Corps. These nurses were trained in the I.N.A. hospitals in Singapore and Rangoon and later sent to work in front line hospitals, where they rendered valuable service in looking after the sick and the wounded. These nurses were subjected to the same rigours as the comba-

tants. Often their hospitals were subjected to aerial bombardment, and artillery fire.

On the completion of four months' military training the first passing out parade of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was held in Singapore on the 30th of March, 1944. Before the final parade, examinations were held. On the practical side was the Range practice. The first time this was done, it was a great thrill as live ammunition was being handled. Even some of the sceptical Japanese officers turned out to see the women soldiers fire their first shots, and they were quite taken aback at the accuracy and marks-manship displayed. The passing-out-parade the next day was the final surprise. Unfortunately Netaji was not present, being somewhere on the Burma front, making the final preparations for the assault on Imphal, and the chief of staff of the I.N.A. took the salute. All the high-ranking officers of the I.N.A., the Japanese officers and the public of Singapore were present, and were thrilled beyond expectation to see the long column of Indian women march smartly past as if they had been trained from infancy. It was difficult to imagine that these stalwart, upright, brisk women were once fragile, delicate, ill-nourished Indian women who had responded to the call of Netaji. Only he had then appreciated their worth, and they had today proved themselves worthy of that appreciation. After this passing-out-parade, these newly created women soldiers were absorbed into the I.N.A. on the same footing as their brothers, and pledged to the same cause, *viz.*, the achievement of the complete Independence of India.

Going to the Front

Now that the training was over, this first batch of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was itching to go into action. Again, the Japanese tried to be obstructive by not providing transport facilities. Again, Netaji was adamant and as always he won the day. Transport was provided and the first batch set out from Singapore with the cry of "Chalo Delhi" on their lips, and the hope in their hearts that if they ever returned it would be only after their motherland had achieved her independence. The first stage of the journey from Malaya to Thailand (Siam) was comparatively simple, although they travelled in cattle trucks. Then started the hazardous part along the newly-constructed Thailand Burma Railway through the dense forests and over the hills of the Thai-Burma Frontier. During the day, the railway truck was the target of enemy bombers, so the journey was generally undertaken in the hours of darkness, the day being spent under cover. During this journey they saw the hundreds of Indian labourers

who were working on the railway and who had built it with their blood and sweat. They welcomed these country women of theirs as if they had been goddesses, for they realized only too well that their existence and the existence of their future generations depended only on one thing, and that was the freedom of their motherland, which these young women hoped to achieve. If India were free, they would be saved. If not, theirs would be one long tale of slavery and exploitation by some foreign Power. What difference if that Power be White or Yellow! Their fate was always the same.

Once in Burma, the next step was to go to the front and to come to grips with the enemy. But the favourable fate which had so long smiled kindly on the aspirations of India's millions to be free, now withdrew her favours. The *Azad Hind Fauz* which went into action on the Indo-Burma border, full of hope and courage, fighting under the most desperate conditions and yet able to gain their way inch by inch, found itself up against overwhelming odds. It was not Men only, but Nature itself who was against the I.N.A. The torrential monsoon burst on them, and yet they clung on without food, shelter, with nothing but their indomitable spirit to cherish them. Knowing that to stick on under such conditions would mean nothing less than total annihilation, Netaji ordered the I.N.A. to retreat back into Burma. The first detatchment of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment reached Burma just at the time when the retreat had started. Thus there was no chance of their going to the front. Still they carried on with their training, trying to increase their stamina and capacity to bear physical strain. In particular they devoted most of their time in learning the art of guerilla and jungle warfare. In addition, several exceptionally spirited young women volunteered for suicide squads and special service work, hoping against hope that once more the tide of battle would turn in our favour. But that was not to be.

Order to Retreat

In April, 1945, they too had to hear the bitter command of retreat from the lips of Netaji himself. And it was not a moment too soon. They began their retreat with the enemy on their heels. All means of transport had to be abandoned due to the non-stop aerial bombardment. For days they tramped through the jungle, being unable even to cook their food for fear of smoke giving away their position. One night they were surrounded by enemy guerillas, who fired blindly at them, killing two of their number and injuring three others. They retaliated by opening fire on all sides,

and the guerillas fearing they would be surrounded by a vastly superior force retreated. Finally, the Regiment reached Thailand and from there proceeded back to Singapore. When Netaji left Malaya on his last trip he gave orders that the Rani of Jhansi Regiment be disbanded and the members be allowed to return to their own homes. This order they obeyed most reluctantly as they would have preferred by far to be taken as prisoners of war along with their brothers of the I.N.A. But the leader's order had to be obeyed implicitly and without questioning.

When the British re-occupied Malaya and Burma their Intelligence Officers interrogated several members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment more out of curiosity than anything else. They were sure that this regiment was raised only for propaganda purposes, but quickly had to revise their opinion. For they found themselves confronted by determined young women who could not be won once by threats or favours, and who answered their questions not in parrot fashion, but with understanding and conviction. And above all, they were impressed by their utter loyalty and devotion to Netaji and their faith in his leadership. It was from these members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment that even the British came to realize that the I.N.A. was no puppet army formed of a handful of ex-P.O.W's. but a mighty force of Indians who were ready to undergo any trials in order to liberate their motherland, and who were all united and welded into one by the dynamic personality of that greatest of Indian leaders—Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

JAI HIND, NETAJI—ZINDABAD, AZAD HIND—ZINDABAD.

"In the name of God, I take this sacred oath that to liberate India and the thirty-eight crores of my countrymen, I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue this sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life.

I shall always remain a servant of India and look after the welfare of thirty-eight crores of Indian brothers and sisters. This shall be for me my highest duty.

Even after winning freedom I will always be prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India's freedom."

—*Subhas Chandra Bose*

SUBHAS BABU AND THE 1942 STRUGGLE

By DR. B. K. KESKAR

The struggle of 1942 may be called the culmination of the great fight for Indian Independence that the Congress has been carrying on for the last 50 years. The Non-co-operation movements of 1921 and 1930 were in reality more of propaganda movements than real struggles for wresting power. No doubt in 1930, the amplitude and intensity of the movement upset the then Government so much that they thought of coming to terms with the Congress. and this led to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It was indeed a great triumph for the cause of National Freedom.

But both movements could not be considered real fights for wresting power. They were only a preparation. It is in 1942 that we had for the first time a real tussle with the British Government, the first effort to wrest power or to see whether it is possible for us to do so. The movement is remarkable for many things. First, it was the outcome of a great revolution in the outlook of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji has been the guiding spirit of our National Struggle for the last 25 years. His philosophy is based on non-violence and love. He seeks to conquer his enemies by self-sacrifice, affection and love. During this period since 1920, he has based his strategy on this principle. Suddenly about the period of the First Cripps' negotiations, his attitude underwent a change. It is difficult now to find out the particular incident which made him change his outlook, and he himself has been very reticent about the whole thing; but it is probable that his decision was based on information that he might have received from high-informed sources. In any case, he became convinced that the British Government did not intend to give India freedom during or after the war. Formerly his belief was that if we could show our capacity for sacrifice and our want of animosity towards the British, it would in the end convert the heart of the British Government. In fact, it was on this supposition, the honesty and good intention of the opponents, that he based his refusal to embarrass the British Government during the war. To him it was against the tenet of non-violence to create difficulties for one's opponent when he is beset by other dangers. Moreover, he believed that if, according to the strategy of love and non-violence, we have to win the heart of our opponents, we cannot embarrass him when he is in mortal danger. We would never win his love in this way.

His revulsion and his new belief that the British Government is incapable of conversion completely changed his strategy and outlook. When you have no hope of converting your opponent there is no need to heed his sentiments. The right moment to fight him would be when he is in difficulties because then he is more liable to come to terms. So, according to his own new belief, the best opportunity for carrying on a fight would be during the war when the British Government was in the throes of all sorts of difficulties.

Secondly, Gandhiji tried to find out some new variations to his old strategy which could make it more dynamic, more revolutionary and more effective. It is unfortunate that he was not able to do so in time, and the Government fearing something very disagreeable arrested him before he could make up his mind on the exact form of the struggle that he would have liked to give. His new strategy remained a closed book excepting some suggestions here and there made to friends during discussion and conversation. It was obvious that later on Gandhiji changed his mind and thought it hopeless, or at least very difficult to evolve any new strategy on this basis of non-violence. After his release he made no reference to what he was then thinking of the evolution of the movement or a possible new strategy.

Triumph of Netaji's Policy

But his new outlook and desire for a new strategy may be considered a triumph for Subhas Chandra Bose and the radicals in the Congress. Subhas Babu has been fighting in the Congress all along for a more aggressive and realistic strategy in our national struggle. He, with other radicals and socialists, had been maintaining all along that it was during the war that we could best fight the British Government. We must try to take advantage of the difficulties of Great Britain, and if we lost this opportunity we might not get any for a long time to come. So, in fact, this revolutionary change in the mind of Gandhiji, which ultimately led to the movement of 1942, is a triumph for Subhas Babu and other radicals. That he was not in India when the movement started but already had slipped out in quest of some drastic solution for Indian independence was thought by many of us to be a misfortune but ultimately it proved to be a great incentive and encouragement to him in his efforts abroad. There is no doubt that if the movement of 1942 had not started, he could not have hoped to make some organisation and effort outside India in order to drive away the British. The great upheaval fortified his belief that if somehow a band of organised soldiers

of freedom reached India in time, the people would rise and support this fight. The response of the Indian people in 1942 was sufficient to convince him that the Indian people would side with him, if he could but reach India with a band of chosen comrades. So there is no doubt that the credit for the formation of the Azad Hind Fauz goes not only to the genius of Subhas Chandra Bose but also to the great movement of 1942.

The seriousness of the upheaval in India convinced the whole world in spite of the censorship of wartime that India no longer wants to remain under the British yoke. Our intense desire for freedom became known to all. Even President Roosevelt tried to influence Churchill that in order to fight the Japanese more effectively he should grant the Indian demand. That in itself is a triumph for 1942 and there is no doubt that this strengthened the determination of Subhas Chandra Bose to create an army of Indians outside India and lead it to join the warriors of Freedom inside the country.




عبدالغفار



Defence Council of the I N A Historical trial in the Red Fort Justice Achru Ram, father of Col Sehga Katju, Sapru, Nehru



I. N. A Advisory Committee

THE EPIC TRIAL OF THE I. N. A.

By K. N. KATJU

I was with several other colleagues closely associated with the late Shri Bhulabhai Desai during his defence of the I.N.A. case, and I may be considered somewhat partial to his great effort, but nevertheless I make bold to say that it will rank as a great forensic performance. It was definitely, I believe, the first argument delivered before a tribunal which endeavoured to justify in point of law, both International and Municipal, the right of the Indian people to wage a war for the liberation of their country from foreign bondage. The argument could have had indeed a wider application; it would cover all peoples at present subject, like India, to foreign rule and desirous of regaining their lost liberties. The case of Indonesia is directly in point. The late Bhulabhai Desai delivered an oral argument. He spoke on two days, altogether for over ten hours, and had almost no notes. The argument was well worthy of consideration in the highest law-courts of the land. There, counsel would have been assisted in the development of his points by observations made from the Bench. In the superior courts of justice, a legal argument of this magnitude and high importance would occasion the keenest lively debate between the Bench and the Bar, both engaged in the search and elucidation of first principles of International Law relevant to the controversy before them. But speaking before a Court Martial consisting of military officers the late Shri Bhulabhai Desai had no such advantage. There were no interruptions of any kind from the first to the last, and the whole argument was a sustained effort to present a point of view which Counsel thought was well-founded in Law and fully applicable to the facts of the case. Speaking purely as a lawyer and in the interest of law and jurisprudence, I regret the absence of a formal judicial pronouncement on the merits of the case as presented by Shri Bhulabhai Desai. His thesis was controverted by the Advocate-General of India (Sir N. P. Engineer) who appeared for the Prosecution. but the matter must rest without a judicial decision, at least for the present.

Shri Bhulabhai Desai quoted extensively from the authoritative text-books,—British, American and Continental on International Law. It was noteworthy that all these books having been written by European jurists dealt at length with the States to be found in Europe and America. There

was scarcely any mention of the countries or the peoples—or the inherent right of these peoples—in Asia and Africa, then under the domination or protection or influence of European States. But it is beyond question that International Law is not static. It is a dynamic force. It has grown from century to century, and owes its exposition and development to the labour of publicists, of text-books, of writers, of jurists, and agreement between the nations and international practice. Furthermore, International Law from the 16th to the 19th century was professedly limited to the Christian nations of Europe and America ; the rest of the world was considered to consist of savages and uncivilised barbarians. But there have been vast developments in the 20th century; old conceptions have changed, the so-called uncivilised peoples, the coloured races, have fought in the European theatres of war, with or against the allies,—the British Indian troops and the Negro forces of America have fought all over the globe. International Law must therefore be extended in its scope to include all the peoples of the world living under recognised administrations in definite societies irrespective of considerations of colour or race. Furthermore, in the 18th and 19th century the peoples living in the so-called colonies were considered to be unfit for government and wholly incompetent to govern themselves. In this century that conception must be discarded. In 1946 America has definitely agreed to grant full independence to the Philippines; the Arab countries including Egypt are independent in fact and in law. India has been promised independence. This being so, International Law must recognise the right of India to raise in revolt against its foreign rulers.

Even in a national State, International Law recognises the validity and the legality of civil wars. Every civil war is a definite revolt against constituted government. A civil war in a national State is nothing but an attempt on the part of one political group or party to overthrow the constituted government and substitute its own authority therefor. It is really nothing but a mere change in the form or structure of the national government. If the insurgents in such a civil war can under International Law engage in a civil war and acquire the status of belligerents, the greater must be the right conceded under International Law to a subject people to rise in revolt against an external authority which is in military occupation of another country, and holds another people under domination without any colour of natural right or justification. In view of the principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter and by President Truman, all people are entitled to be free and all foreign rule is unjust and without any basis under International Law.

Under the rules governing procedure prior to the holding of a Court Martial, it is necessary to record preliminary evidence, as far as possible, in the presence of the accused, and when it is finally decided to bring the persons concerned to trial before Court Martial, the accused are furnished with a summary of this evidence. Such a summary had been furnished to the accused in the present case. Its perusal made it evident that the Prosecution were themselves anxious to establish that the accused were members of a well-organised and well-disciplined army which was maintained by a newly-formed State called the Provisional Government of Free India. At the trial, voluminous evidence, oral and documentary, was recorded. The defence produced high officers of the Foreign Department of the Japanese Government, and many members, officers and men of the I.N.A. were also examined as defence witness. At the end, really there was little dispute as to the actual facts of the case, and Shri Bhulabhai Desai was able to establish—I say successfully—that the facts were really beyond controversy. He has marshalled those facts with great skill in his argument, and I may briefly summarise them here:—

Over 2 millions of Indians were settled prior to 1941 in the various countries of East Asia, for example, Burma, Malaya, Singapore, Annam, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, etc. These people considered themselves to be a homogeneous community and were not the nationals or the domiciled subjects of the country where they resided.

As soon as Japan declared war on the 8th December, 1941, the conditions of Indians in East Asia became very precarious. As country after country in East Asia was run over by the Japanese in quick succession in a few months, Indians were left completely unprotected, open to depredations of all kinds, and their life, honour and property were entirely at the mercy of the invaders. Their first thought was to take such steps as were open to them for their own security. British power, to which they might possibly have looked up for protection, had for the moment disappeared, and the future was dark and uncertain. The demand of the present was insistent.

In February, Singapore fell, and large number of Indian troops were surrendered to the Japanese. Col. Hunt handed over these troops with bag and baggage to the Japs, and expressly stated that henceforward they should obey orders of the Japs just as they would have obeyed the orders of the British, otherwise they might be punished.

Shri Bhulabhai Desai submitted that this open handing over absolved in law Indian troops from their allegiance to the British king. This alle-

giance being purely legal, when protection was withdrawn, the duty of the subject to the King was also extinguished. In the case of the subjects of a national State there may or may not have been a different result, but that question did not arise here in the case.

It was proved that the Japanese made a clear offer to the Indian troops to organise, if they wanted to, as a separate State for the protection of their own countrymen in East Asia. This matter was carefully discussed by the Indian civilians, and the purposes of the Japanese in making this offer were closely scrutinised. There was not the least desire or inclination to become puppets in the hands of the Japanese, the real anxiety was, first, protection of the Indians in East Asia, and secondly, the achievement of freedom of India. This latter object was also important, because in 1942 there was a real danger of the collapse of the British power in India, and then the existence of a free Indian Government to carry on the administration in India was a matter of vital importance.

Representative Indians living all over East Asia met in conference in Bangkok, and decided upon the formation of an Indian National Army. Immediately after the commencement of hostilities between Japan and Britain, the Indian Independence Movement had been launched, and an Indian Independence League had been established, and its branches had been formed in Malaya. After the Bangkok Conference in June 1942, the movement spread all over East Asia. Branches of the I. I. League were formed everywhere with a large membership. The Indian National Army was wholly national in the sense that it was manned and officered by Indians alone and was also supported and financed by Indians. Under the stress of circumstances it had to buy, or take on a lend and lease basis, arms, ammunitions and military equipment from the Japs.

It was proved that while the I.N.A. was formed in 1942, it did not engage in any warlike operation against the British in 1942.

Owing to internal differences and some suspicion arising out of the vagueness of the statements of Japanese Ministers in relation to India, the I.N.A. was disbanded in December, 1942, and ceased to function even on paper as a military organisation. A Council of Action, however, continued to look after the security of the Indians in Malaya and elsewhere.

On the arrival of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose in Singapore in June 1943, the Indian National Movement took a definite concrete shape. There was immense enthusiasm and support among Indians of all communities behind Subhas Chandra Bose. By common consent a new Indian National State was formed. Subhas Chandra Bose was by common consent elected

to be its Head. He owed allegiance to this State. He had a Government consisting of many Ministers and again all swore allegiance to the newly formed State. The Provisional Free Government of India was formed. An Army, the I.N.A. was organised, equipped and trained in a strict accordance with Military Law as obtaining in other countries in Europe and America. It was recognised as an Independent State by many Powers who were then fighting the British and its allies. All the Indians in East Asia owed allegiance to this State, and as many as 2,23,000 were proved to have taken the oath of allegiance to the new State, and out of them at least over 23,000 actually volunteered to serve among the combatant ranks of the I.N.A. The Provisional Government had its own funds and resources, and subsequently acquired its own territories. From 1944 it engaged itself in active war-like operations against the British. It took part in the Arakan campaign in 1944; it fought in Burma in 1945.

The late Bhulabhai Desai contended that under International Law the Provisional Free Government complied with all the requirements of a Sovereign State. Over 2 millions of a homogeneous community were the members of the State. The Government carried on in so far as it was possible in the circumstances then prevailing, all governmental activities. It had numerous departments. It had a well-organised disciplined army, it had its own Act, and it was at war with Britain.

The leading counsel for the defence clearly showed from the evidence that suggestions made on behalf of the prosecution that Indian prisoners of war had been coerced into enlisting in the I.N.A. were baseless. Evidence was almost unanimous that no pressure of any kind was ever exercised. Shri Subhas Chandra Bose—Netaji—as he was called affectionately throughout East Asia by all Indians—made it clear over and over again that any one who did not wish to fight, may without the least hesitation withdraw. This option was given, almost quixotically, even at the front by some of the accused. Evidence was also emphatic that volunteers were too many to be absorbed in the I.N.A. and there was a large surplus of volunteers. And as the late Bhulabhai Desai said, in those circumstances it would be ridiculous for anybody to try to coerce any one to enlist. From Netaji downwards, all leaders and officers insisted upon with almost painful reiteration, that this was an army for a noble cause, *viz.*, the liberation of India, that the Netaji could not offer anything but blood and sweat and toil and tears; that conditions of service were bound to be hard and austere; the rations were scanty; and the pay was meagre. With all this, the spirit and morale were high, because the resolve was great. The Army had its own flag,

its own emblems, its own badges, and was definitely treated as allies by the Japanese Government. He pointed out that even in Europe as between Allies there were unified commands and mutual help of all kinds. He further insisted that whatever may have been the intentions of the Japanese Government, it was clear that the members of the new Indian State and their Army believed in good faith that they were fighting on terms of equality, and that when they entered India they would enter as liberators. Proclamations were issued by which it declared that every inch of Indian territory conquered, would be administered by the Azad Hind Government, and for that purpose special officers had been trained for civil administration.

The late Bhulabhai Desai also discussed at length that the Azad Hind Government had territories of its own. The Andamans and the Nicobar Islands had been formally ceded to them and had been renamed by them. They had also some territory in Burma, 15 sq. miles in area under their direct administration, and they exercised control over extensive tracts on the Assam border, which were temporarily occupied by the I.N.A.

It is true that in the text-books on International Law, great emphasis is laid when dealing with insurgents on the possession by them of a definite territory. This must be so in the case of internal rebellions or civil wars, whether by some of the residents of the country or by a colony situated outside the mother country. If the insurgents are able to set up an independent State, have an organised army, it is obvious that they cannot live in the clouds, and must have some definite territories under their control and administration. The case of Azerbaizan in Persia is an instance in point. Similarly, with a colony like the American Colonies in 1775—the late Bhulabhai Desai relied greatly upon the Declaration of Independence issued by Washington and his colleagues. It is equally obvious that the insurgents in such colonies may set up a State by denouncing the rule of the mother country. But the same rule in International Law, he argued, would apply with equal force to a liberating army coming from outside. Indians in East Asia were over 2 millions in number but they had no territories of their own. They resolved to organise themselves for their own security as well as for the winning of the freedom of India. They formed a State. They organised an army; but obviously they could only depend for a territory of their own either by cession from their allies or by the anticipated liberation of their own country. He pointed out that in the two world wars, landless Governments were a common feature. In World War No. 1,

Belgium lost all its territory. In World War No. 2, London was a heaven of the *emigres* Governments of Poland, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and others, who had for many years not an inch of territory under their control. They had lost all their possessions. The period of time makes little difference, it is the fact which matters. Similarly, under modern circumstances it is perfectly possible for a State to function as an independent unit under International Law, whose chief aim is to liberate its own territories from foreign occupation.

I wish to emphasise clearly that the late Bhulabhai Desai was addressing a legal argument. He was not addressing a political or a legislative assembly. He, therefore, insisted that once you find a newly-formed State with a well-organised army carrying on war, then municipal law must cease to apply. The matter passes from the domain of ordinary criminal law to the rules and laws of civilized war. Amidst the clash of arms the ordinary criminal law becomes silent. He quoted copiously from text-books, but still more forcibly from declarations made by British statesmen, including Mr. Churchill in 1937 during the non-intervention controversies arising out of the civil war in Spain, about the right of peoples to rebel against constituted authorities and their further right to be recognised as belligerents by neutral countries. He referred to the announcements of General Eisenhower regarding the status of Maquis of France. He invited attention particularly to a very opposite passage in a leading text-book on Internationel Law, *viz.*, Oppenheim, which was published in 1945, and which, according to the late Bhulabhai Desai, constituted the present position under International Law. He further argued that even under the municipal law of India that is to say, the Indian Penal Code, Section 79 of the Code clearly recognised as a justification for any offence —even an offence of waging war against the King—any law applicable to the matter, and he said that the rules of International Law are always accepted everywhere in all civilised countries, in America and in the English Courts, as rules having the force of law. Therefore, even on the narrow ground of Section 79, a state of war was a complete answer to the charge. Anticipating an argument on the part of the prosecution based on allegiance, he drew a distinction between what may be called legal allegiance as opposed to natural allegiance. In the first place allegiance involves a reciprocal obligation of protection on the part of the Sovereign, and the Defence Counsel insisted that when at the meeting held at Farrer Park on the 16th of February, 1942, Col. Hunt handed over all officers and men of the Indian

Army, almost body and soul, to the Japanese, the bond of allegiance was broken. At any rate, the people concerned were justified in believing and did believe in good faith that the bond no longer existed. In a free country having self-governing institutions, a good deal may be said on the virtues of allegiance, but to insist upon an everlasting allegiance on the part of a subject people would be tantamount to asking them to agree to the perpetuation of their slavery. Shri Bhūlabhai Desai contended that it was the right of every Indian, if he so thought fit, to disclaim his allegiance to the British king and join an army of liberation for gaining the freedom of India. Dual allegiance to king and country may, in the case of free governing countries, coincide, but in the case of a subject people there is bound to be a conflict of loyalties. The American Colonies in 1776 deliberately disowned the king in preference to the country, and the Indian and the I.N.A. were entitled to do the same.

The accused were charged separately with murder in that in accordance with the provisions of the Indian National Army Act some deserters had been tried by Court Martial and sentenced to death. The late Bhulabhai Desai in the first place argued that there was no reliable evidence that these sentences had been in fact carried out. On the contrary, there was evidence that in many other cases such sentences of death had been remitted. In the alternative, he argued that any such separate charge was really groundless in point of law. The accused, who were members of the I.N.A., were acting in obedience to superior orders, were units of an organised army, and could not be tried for individual acts. Liability, if any, was of their State. They owed no personal liability at all. There was not the slightest proof that they had committed any atrocities, so-called, any acts of torture or anything. They had behaved throughout as honourable men from the highest motives of devotion and patriotism to their country. And they were entitled to be treated as P.O.W., and this was precisely the claim which they made when the I.N.A. surrendered in Rangoon and when particularly Capt. Sehgal offered to surrender to a detachment of the British troops.

I do not want to detain readers any further from a perusal of the late Bhulabhai Desai's effective argument. As I have said, my only regret is that it was not addressed before a Court of Law like the Federal Court or the High Court in India. Had it been, I have no doubt that the Judges would have observed, in the words of the Lord Chief Justice of England in an equally celebrated case, "It was an argument well delivered in accordance with the highest traditions of the Bar and in furtherance of Justice."

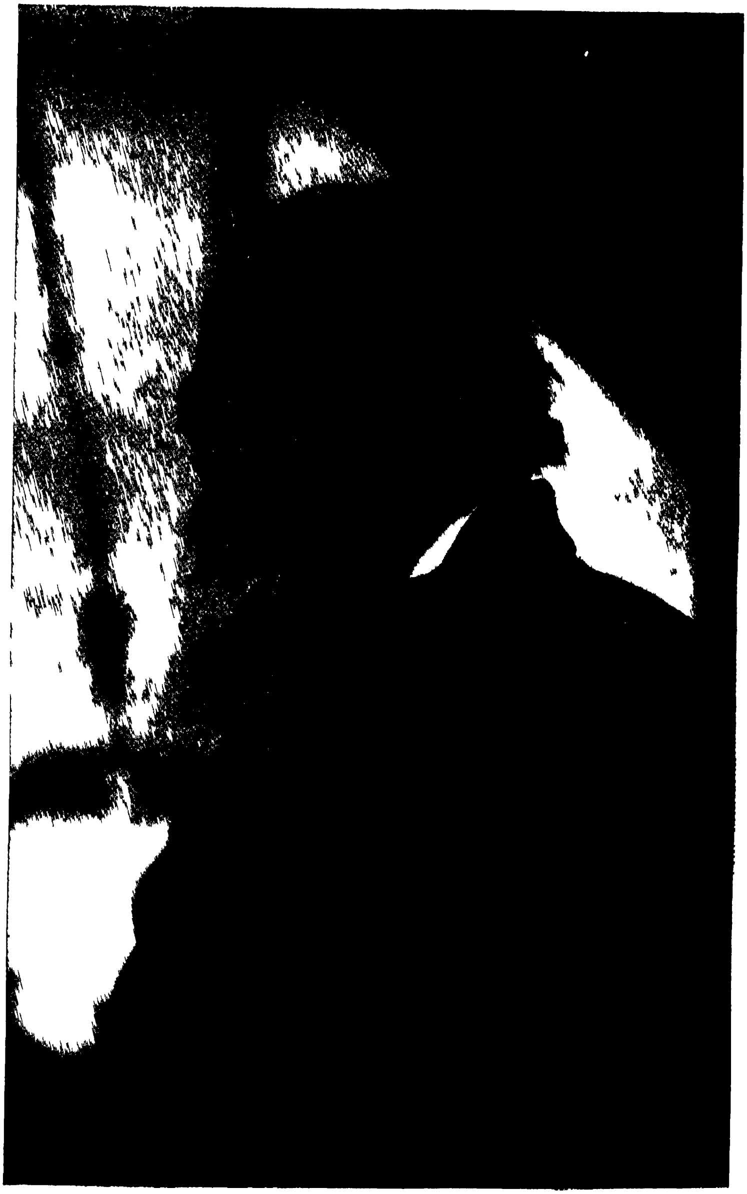
The late Bhulabhai Desai argued not only as a lawyer but as an Indian on behalf of brother Indians, who had sacrificed their all in a notable endeavour for gaining the lost freedom of their country according to their lights.

AN APPRECIATION

By J. P. RAWAT

Since my release from jail in July, 1945, I have not come across a single Indian who is not proud of the achievements of Subhas Babu. One may have differed in the past with his political ideology or method of approach to tackle the day-to-day problems of the country, but nobody can dispute the sincerity, ability and capacity of Subhas Babu. I met him first of all in 1931 when he came to Agra. I had the honour to discuss with him the then political situation of the country and I found him to possess an open mind and ready to discuss everything freely, though I was quite junior to him in politics. I opposed him when he stood a second time for the presidentship of Indian National Congress, but I had the greatest possible respect for him. He was one man who could openly declare his disagreement even with the greatest man of the world—Mahatma Gandhi—when he felt and was convinced that his own way of thinking was correct. He was sincere to his conscience and never cared for the favours or frowns of anybody, however great he might have been. It was no joke to have gone out of India in those critical days and risk life and the entire career for the sake of the motherland. If you want to see the great organising capacity which he possessed, you may talk to any ordinary I.N.A. soldier. The way in which an ordinary I.N.A. soldier talks of politics and discusses the day-to-day problems of the country shows what sort of training was given to them under his guidance. The strict discipline, honesty of purpose, efficiency and political consciousness which is invariably found in the I.N.A. personnel is proof positive of the ability and capacity of its founder-organiser. Though Subhas Babu differed from the Congress High Command yet he taught his I.N.A. people that they should always remain faithful to the Indian National Congress, as it was the only organisation which could bring freedom to the country.

Though I do not know whether Subhas Babu is physically alive or not yet I am sure mentally and spiritually that he is in the hearts of us all and is inspiring us to fight for the freedom of our country. I hope the country will fulfil Subhas Babu's cherished hope of seeing India complety free from foreign domination.



The Late Shri Ramananda Chatterjee



Netaji Bose speaking

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE—THE CRISIS

By N. C. MITRA

The highest honour which the Congress can confer on a devoted servant of the country in recognition of the signal services to the cause was denied to Subhas Chandra Bose on several occasions. Difference in ideology and occasional conflicts of views and opinions deprived him of the necessary support from the persons in influence in the Congress organisation. To the determined mind of Subhas Chandra any compromise ȯn the question of ideology is unthinkable. His predominant revolutionary outlook and characteristic determination will not permit it. Even in 1929 when top-ranking leaders pressed him and Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru to sign the all-parties Manifesto along with other Congress leaders accepting Lord Irwin's declaration about the Round Table Conference to frame a scheme of Dominion Constitution for India he stuck to his refusal, but Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru succumbed to persuasion. In his youthful vigour Subhas Chandra Bose was impatient to march headlong to the goal staking everything, but others yielded to counsels of caution. In striking instances, what Subhas Chandra Bose thought to-day others followed suit later after the opportune moment had slipped away.

The release of Subhas Chandra Bose on the 19th March, 1937, in broken health after continued detention evoked singular popular demonstration. The reception accorded to him at the public meeting in Deshabandhu Park, the vast gathering, and the feeling speeches delivered showed the hold of his dynamic personality over the mass.

Advised by physicians, Subhas Chandra Bose, shortly afterwards, proceeded for a change and rest to Dalhousie where he stayed with his friend Dr. Dharamvir for some time. From Dalhousie he contributed two admirable articles to the Press—"Europe: Today and Tomorrow" and "Japan's Role in the Far East". It attracted the attention of the thinking public—interested in international politics. After returning from Dalhousie he went to Kurseong and returned to Calcutta in time for the All-India Congress Committee meetings in Calcutta held on the 29th, 30th and 31st October, 1937.

After his release hopes were entertained by his friends that his claim to the Presidentship of the Congress would not be further side-tracked on

any issue however important it may be made to appear. After the meetings of the Working Committee in the beginning of November, 1937, the matter was put beyond doubt when Mahatma Gandhi expressed himself in favour of his election.

He left for Europe early in November, 1937, immediately on the conclusion of the Working Committee meetings to recover himself fully so as to be able to do his very best in the discharge of his duties. He thought of the office more in terms of service than of honour. He was abroad barely for two and a half months and was back in Karachi on the 23rd January, 1938, less than a month before the Haripura Session of the Congress, held on the 19th, 20th and 21st February, 1938.

Presidential Speech at Haripura Congress

The presidential speech at the Haripura Session of the Congress shows the clarity of his thought and ideas. The problems which confronted the country then and now were visualised in his usual bold style, leaving little to imagination. Subhas Chandra's suggestions regarding the solution of the problems still deserve careful consideration. The topics dealt with were varied. His words about relations with the British people after severance of British connection are worth remembering in the present context: "Like the President of the Eire, I should also say that we have no enmity towards the British people. We are fighting Great Britain and we want the fullest liberty to determine our future relations with her. But once we have real self-determination there is no reason why we should not enter into the most cordial relations with the British people."

His address contained some controversial points which must have been of alarming interest to the right-wing Congressmen and led to unpleasant consequences in the future. He expressed his determined opposition to the acceptance of the Federal Scheme. He advocated effective control by the Congress executive over the Congress Ministries. He boldly asserted the advisability of having a leftist *bloc* in the Congress with a Socialist programme within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the Indian Congress.

The conditions, which had not changed, may well be described in the words of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, "Congress leadership preferred the company of the landed magnates to that of the socially advanced groups in their own rank. It was obvious that a wide gulf separated us from many of our leaders."

Subhas' speech also bore sufficient indication of his sincere anxiety

regarding the foreign policy of the Congress and of developing international contacts, propaganda for the Indian cause through the foreign Press, through Indian-made films and through Art Exhibitions and above all through personal contacts. He was very much disappointed at the complete lack of any interest and effort in that direction. In this background, the incidents regarding the Will of the late Vithalbhai Patel should be considered to appreciate the course of events. Although the suggestion of Subhas Chandra Bose did not seem to have received the consideration it deserved, the necessity came to be fully realised later on. The country is grateful to those who went abroad on propaganda tours. Shrimati Vijaylakshmi Pundit's efforts and achievements in America are still fresh in our memory and we wish others equally well-placed had emulated her example. Many Indians residing abroad have now been interesting themselves in this direction with considerable zeal. Though limited in scope the benefit derived is not at all negligible for counteracting the inspired propaganda in foreign countries by official and semi-official organisations against the cause of Indian independence.

As Head of the Congress Executive

After the Haripura Session of the Congress, Subhas Chandra Bose went over from province to province carrying the message of the Congress and explaining its programme. His tours were marked with the enthusiastic receptions he received and the mass demonstration of his popularity. He exhorted the people to be prepared for the coming struggle. In a speech in Calcutta in March 1938, he said that "the psychological moment had arrived when Indians should press their united demands on the British nation who were then powerless to resist them."

During the middle of the year much of his time and attention were devoted to the efforts for the release of political prisoners. Mahatmaji also took active interest in the cause and energetically set about the question. The efforts met with some success though not as was desired or expected.

In his extensive propaganda tours in the eastern districts of Bengal he received rousing receptions alike from Hindus and Muslims. The demonstration of his hold as the Congress President over a section of the Muslims was too much for some of the adherents of the Muslim League. At Brahmanberia while he was being led in a procession, it was attacked by a section of the Muslims causing injuries to him and some others who were accompanying him. Undaunted by this cowardly attack he went to the meeting which was the biggest in that part of the country.

About this time some canvassing and speculations were going on in some circles in the Congress for the acceptance of the Federal Scheme under the Government of India Act with some modifications. On July 8, Subhas Chandra Bose made a statement that he would resign the Presidentship, if necessary, in order to be free to carry on the agitation against the Federal Scheme. It had its reactions.

Dr. Khare and His Ministry

An incident of considerable importance about this time was the ministerial tangle in the Central Provinces. From the beginning there was absence of team work amongst the Congress Ministers in that Province. There was jealousy between the Hindi-speaking and the Mahratta-speaking population of the Province which had its reflection even in the Ministry. Apart from that, charges of nepotism and jobbery were ventilated in the Press against some of the Ministers. Mutual recriminations went on unabated for sometime. Dr. Khare seemed helpless in the matter and things came to such a pass that the Congress Parliamentary Sub-committee had to give out the hint that unless the Ministers made it up amongst themselves they will all be forced to go out of office. A compromise was entered into at Panchmari but the terms were not implemented. Public feeling ran high when it became known that Mr. Sharif, the Minister-in-charge of Law, had released a Muslim prisoner, an Inspector of Schools, charged with a sexual offence against a woman without consulting his colleagues. The matter reached a crisis when Dr. Khare without taking into confidence the members of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-committee sought the assistance of the Governor to reshuffle the ministry. He and some Ministers handed in their resignations to the Governor, the others refused but were dismissed by the Governor who called upon Dr. Khare to form a new Ministry. The Congress Parliamentary Sub-committee intervened and took serious exception to such a hasty and indiscreet action of Dr. Khare. The Sub-committee had the fullest support of the Working Committee. Dr. Khare was removed from the leadership and Pundit Ravi Shankar Shukla was elected the leader of the Central Provinces Congress Parliamentary party at its meeting held on the 27th July, 1938, under the chairmanship of Subhas Chandra Bose. Before the end of the month a new Ministry was formed and started functioning with Pundit Ravi Shankar Shukla as the Chief Minister. The decisions of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-committee and the Working Committee were approved of by the All-India Congress Committee in its session held on the 24th, 25th and 26th September, 1938. The Working Committee was further

asked to take disciplinary step against Dr. Khare. Subhas Chandra Bose as the President had to take his part in the matter but was sorry for Dr. Khare. He regretted that Dr. Khare had by his hasty and indiscreet action placed himself in such a position. Even after the removal of Dr. Khare from the leadership there continued to be considerable unseemly controversy, statements and counter-statements, even charges and counter-charges between Dr. Khare and Mahatmaji which found considerable publicity in the Press. It continued till the 17th September, 1938, when a demonstration was staged outside the Assembly Chamber. In the Chamber Dr. Khare read out an explanatory statement which was replied to by the Chief Minister Pundit Ravi Shankar Shukla.

BENGALEE-BIHAREE CONTROVERSY

The Bengalee-Biharee controversy arising out of the policy adopted by the Congress Ministry in Bihar affecting the rights of the Bengalees of Bihar on the question of domicile, public services, education, industry and commerce was considered by many to be unwise and against Congress principles. It was brought to the foreground for consideration of the Working Committee by persons who were not only interested in the questions involved but in the prestige and fair name of the Congress. With commendable energy Mr. P. R. Das, the eminent lawyer, actively interested himself in the matter more out of his love for the prestige of the Congress and took considerable pains to assist the Congress High Command to satisfactorily settle the matter.

The matter came up before the Working Committee in different meetings during the year. Subhas Chandra Bose also took a lively interest in the matter as he sincerely felt that the Congress should always sternly check provincial jealousies as an evil malady in the national life. In spite of everything no finality was reached beyond authorising Shri Rajendra Prasad to satisfactorily settle the matter. He made a report but unfortunately the Bengalees in Bihar could not have the benefits of his recommendations.

NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

In July, 1938, the Working Committee passed a resolution authorising Subhas Chandra Bose as the President to convene a conference of the Ministers of Industries of the Provinces. A conference was convened and met at Delhi on the 2nd and 3rd October, 1938. The conference passed a resolution for setting up a Planning Committee. The personnel of the Committee was left to the selection of Subhas Chandra Bose. A committee was set up with Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru as its Chairman. Subhas Chandra

Bose said that "Circles in close touch with Mahatma Gandhi disapproved of this step and regarded the National Planning Committee as a menace to the aims and objects of the Village Industries Association which was a creation of Mahatma Gandhi. Some went so far as to opine that the National Planning Committee would undo the life-work of the Mahatmâ." According to him, this was another item in the charge-sheet against him.

On the 13th September, 1938, the Saadulla Ministry in Assam resigned to avoid facing a resolution of no-confidence. Subhas Chandra Bose proceeded to Shillong and with his wise counsel a coalition Ministry was formed in Assam on the 19th September, 1938. With a view to keeping himself in touch with the developments in Assam, he had to delay his departure for Delhi to attend the Working Committee meetings there. As soon as he was free he started from Calcutta in a small plane to reach Delhi without loss of time. The strain of the journey in such a plane in an adverse atmosphere was too much for him, overworked as he was then. When the plane stopped at Cawnpore he was suffering from high fever with a severe pain in the head which made it impossible to proceed further in the plane. He had to take rest at Cawnpore and could not be present at the meetings of the Working Committee on the 24th and 25th September, 1938, but did so on the 26th September, 1938, in spite of his ill health. It is one of the many instances of his remarkable sense of service to the cause of the country which to him was above all other considerations. His is a life truly sacrificed to the cause of his motherland.

Tripuri Congress President Nomination

In January, 1939, the public mind was considerably agitated over the Presidential election. The majority of the Congress High Command had during and after the session of the Committee preceding the election come to an understanding to have Moulana Abul Kalam Azad as the next President without taking into their confidence the President and the other members of the Committee who were not at one with them in all their views and methods. There was a pact to keep out Subhas Chandra Bose. The reasons advanced were not convincing but rather amusing. It was too much to expect the same to be taken at their face value. Motives were widely attributed with some justification. The activities of Subhas Chandra Bose in uncompromising opposition to the federation scheme and his views regarding retention of effective control by the Congress Executive over the Congress Ministers were not looked upon with favour by some of the powerful forces

within the Congress. It was difficult to keep pace with his selfless sacrifices and bold policies, bordering on reckless disregard of all counsels of caution.

Three names were nominated by the delegates for election. Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya. When the nominations were announced Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya wrote to the Press in Bombay on the 17th January, 1939, that he desired to withdraw from the contest, but for apparent reasons Moulana Abul Kalam Azad who did not intend to stand for election, prevailed upon him to withdraw the statement and himself issued a statement, surprising indeed in its indiscretion, recommending the election of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya. It evoked a statement from Subhas Chandra Bose giving out the reasons for his desire to stand for election. "The progressive sharpening of the anti-imperialist struggle in India has given birth to new ideas, ideologies, problems and programmes. People are consequently veering round to the opinion that, as in other free countries, the Presidential election in India should be fought on the basis of definite problems and programmes so that the contest may help the clarification of issues and give a clear indication of the working of the public mind."

STATEMENTS AND COUNTER-STATEMENTS

The counter-statement issued by the members of the Congress High Command supporting the claim of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya had nothing striking in it except a few passages which were revelations indeed. "We feel that it is sound policy to adhere to the rule of not re-electing the same President except under exceptional circumstances." The Congress constitution providing the procedure for election of the President by the franchise of the delegates was a direct contradiction to this assertion. Had there been such a policy, it would not have been sound but just the contrary. The office of honour, the functions and its duties are such that it ought to, under all circumstances, be left to the choice of the Congressmen unfettered by influences, argumentative, sentimental, threatening or otherwise. They mentioned that ideologies, policies and programmes are not relevant to the consideration of the choice of the President. A pertinent question may be asked, if these are not relevant then what it is? Then why was this undue anxiety to have Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya? Personalities apart, was he so well-known and popular throughout the country? A devoted Congressman and an amiable gentleman, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya has many qualities, but does not the office and duties of the President require something more—a

more vigorous and forceful personality who can make a greater mass appeal ? In their eagerness they advanced an unreal argument overlooking that the same could be used against them with greater force. "The position of the President is that of a Chairman. More than this, the President symbolises as under a constitutional monarchy the unity and solidarity of the nation." They conveniently overlooked the constitution, the objective of the Congress, previous happenings and above all the fact that the very idea cut the ground under their feet. If that was so, then why was there such an unseemly combination to keep out Subhas Chandra Bose ? What plausible and reasonable objection could there be if instead of Shri "A", Shri "B" was elected by the free exercise of the franchise? The election of Subhas Chandra Bose under such or any circumstances could, by no stretch of imagination, have been "harmful to the country's cause." According to Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, "the President can make a difference in the carrying out of the Congress policy and the Congress President is not merely a Speaker." In fact he complained to Subhas Chandra Bose that "his attitude was entirely a passive one as President and he functioned more as a Speaker than as a directing President." Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai also protested against the passive policy followed by Subhas Chandra Bose. Was not the popular belief justified that an "Yes-man" was desired to adorn the office of President—a person of their choice and wholly non-interfering?

Subhas Chandra Bose in his statement, issued on the 26th January, 1939, said that "the real issue is that of Federation. If a genuine anti-federationist is accepted as the President, I shall gladly retire in his favour. This offer publicly announced, will stand till the eve of the election."

Subhas Elected Second-time President

In spite of all opposition, Subhas Chandra Bose was duly elected on the 29th January, 1939. The Congressmen had their choice between Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya—"quite fitted for the post of the President of the Congress, one of the oldest members of the Working Committee with a long and unbroken record of public service to his credit" and Subhas Chandra Bose "who after all is not an enemy of the country (Gandhiji's words)". The ideas and ideologies of Subhas Chandra Bose and the issues on which the election was fought stood vindicated.

The association of Mahatma Gandhi in the move to keep out Subhas Chandra Bose became clear, when Mahatmaji issued his statement four days after the election. The reference to Subhas Chandra Bose in such terms caused pain to many Congressmen irrespective whether they have

complete faith in all his ideas and technique or not but equally alike hold him and his views in esteem. The same, to use his own expression, may, with all humility, be characterised as "unjustified and unworthy." It will remain a mystery how such an unbalanced statement came to be issued which had, at least, the effect of creating much confusion. Equally mysterious will remain the attitude taken up by Gandhiji. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru's words may offer a convenient explanation: "I know that Gandhiji usually acts on instinct (I prefer to call it that than an "inner voice" or an answer to prayer), and very often that instinct is right. The reasons which he afterwards advances to justify are wholly after-thoughts and seldom carry one very far." It may humbly be said that his "instinct" on this occasion was not right.

Equally unjustified and unworthy was the subsequent move to deny Subhas Chandra Bose his rightful place and freedom of action permissible under the constitution of the Congress. But out of evil cometh good. Had it been otherwise we might not have found Subhas Chandra Bose what he is today. It cannot be denied that he has by his service, sufferings and sacrifice added much to the glory and prestige of the Congress and pushed forth the organisation to its present position. He was destined to do it and he has done it.

Resignation of Working Committee Members

The Tripuri session of the Congress was remarkable in many aspects. Before the session all the members of the Working Committee, excepting Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and Shri Sarat Chandra Bose, resigned without waiting for the open session of the Congress when a new Working Committee would have been formed. The latter course would have been decent and becoming of the great leaders. Perhaps the course adopted was considered necessary to precipitate the crisis culminating in the retirement of Subhas Chandra Bose and the election of Shri Rajendra Prasad by methods considered questionable by many. Even after the lapse of years the memory of those days is painful indeed. It would have been natural for common men to act likewise but better methods were expected from leaders of such eminence and qualities. It is confidently expected in fairness to those who were responsible for the course of the events that when the opportune time arrives they will be the first to make amends nobly. We have had sufficient indication already and the country is grateful.

Shortly before the Congress Session at Tripuri in the middle of March, Subhas Chandra Bose became seriously ill. His condition for days was

alarming. One evening it was such that, his brother Dr. Sunil Chandra Bose being away from the house at the time, frantic calls had to be passed through the telephone for immediate medical aid. Yet, when a request was made for the postponement of the session for some time to allow Subhas Chandra Bose to get better, it was turned down. Perhaps the loss of a few thousands of rupees and some inconvenience to the organisers weighed greater. In spite of the advice of the physicians and his friends Subhas Chandra Bose was determined to attend the session even at the risk of his life. Dangerously ill, unable without assistance to raise his head from his pillow, or to change sides, Subhas Chandra Bose had to be carried to Tripuri. Surprisingly indeed, one heard the tale how doubts were expressed at Tripuri whether the illness was real or feigned. Propaganda *par excellence*, indeed! Such was the background of the Tripuri Congress. The opposition against Subhas Chandra Bose had mustered their forces, fully mobilised and consolidated, with Subhas Chandra Bose seriously ill, his friends much too anxious and engrossed in his illness than anything else.

Gandhiji at Rajkot

It was puzzling to the unwary and the unsophisticated how Mahatmaji in spite of the importance of the session and the knowledge of the array of forces against the elected President thought it better to proceed to the tiny state of Rajkot to settle a controversy in which the ruler of the State and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in the interests of the subjects of the State, were involved. The mission could surely have been delayed for two or three weeks without much consequence. While at Rajkot he undertook a fast which, however, ultimately ended in frustration. If all the facts that actually happened,—may be quite unexpectedly—are patterned together, it has the appearance of fitting together into an well-thought-out scheme, of which any diplomat might be proud.

The Pant Resolution

In the short speech prepared by Subhas Chandra Bose in his sickbed he again pleaded for the presentation of the national demand in the form of an ultimatum with a time limit. In discussing the situation he voiced the views of a large section of his countrymen that the opportune time was being missed. Perhaps because the suggestion came from him, it did not find favour. An argument advanced seemed surprising: "The ultimatum idea would give a chance to the enemy to prepare himself." Is such a suggestion compatible with the technique of "Satyagraha" advocated

and preached by Mahatmaji ? The result of the deliberations on the point was the verbose resolution on "National Demand" leading to nowhere —"words, words and words."

If one were to record his reaction, unbiassed but candid and critical, to the resolution of Pundit Pant, the way it was introduced, canvassed and deliberated upon, the circumstances in which it was carried, it would be painful reading. It will not be judicious now and the purpose will be best served by dealing with this episode with restraint, avoiding comments where possible.

Pundit Pant and the leaders who lent their support to it knew that such a resolution could not be introduced in such a fashion at such stage. Apart from technicalities the resolution was against the elements of the Congress constitution. Technicalities, of which so much was made of, both before and afterwards, were conveniently ignored. Sentiments were appealed to and passions roused with the one and only seeming object. Rajaji's speech and reference to "leaky boat" might have been a clever performance but it was not one based on reason. When reason fails the aid of similes is conveniently invoked. But he had the advantage and opportunity, and it was so like him to avail himself of it. Propaganda went so far as to invent and circulate the myth of telephonic communications with Mahatma Gandhi at Rajkot and his approval of the resolution.

On the 12th March, 1939, *i.e.*, the third day of the Congress session, held in camera, Pundit Govind Ballav Pant moved the resolution the critical part of which was: "In view of the critical situation that may develop during the coming year and in view of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress and the country to victory during such a crisis, the Congress regards it as imperative that the Executive Authority of the Congress should command his implicit confidence and requests the President to nominate the Working Committee for the ensuing year in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji." Pitiable indeed is the questionable confession of utter helplessness !

"If you want Gandhiji's guidance, you have to compel him by this resolution to give the guidance and so long as you do not do that, you can not expect him to give his advice and guidance," said the sponsor of the resolution. Pious and forceful indeed in words but he counted without his host and overlooked that, asked or unasked, such advice and guidance ought to be forthcoming from one who considered himself a servant of the nation. It was further said, "If you want him to shoulder the responsibility then how can you expect him to do so if you do not give him some voice in

the formation of the Congress Cabinet." Was there any justification to for the idea that without the course suggested Mahatmaji would non-co-operate when occasion arose for him to give the lead. Had it been so, he would not have been our Mahatmaji.

There was enough of heat and appeal to sentiment in the speeches in support but very little of logic and reason. The letters of Gandhiji to Subhas Chandra Bose refusing assistance in the formation of the Working Committee was a complete answer to whatever reason there might have been in the avowed object of the resolution. Quite naturally they felt hurt at their defeat under such circumstances with such a combination and in indignation they did what appeared to them to be best to retrieve their position. There may be other reasons but it is better not to speculate.

Congress Socialists

A regrettable part of this episode was the way the Congress Socialist party under the leadership of Shri Jaiprakas Narain acted. The indecision of the Socialist leader at crucial moments and the erring policy at times adopted have often been puzzling. Although he declared openly that he did not agree with many things that were said in the resolution yet he chose to remain neutral and denied the support of his party to Subhas Chandra Bose. It was like "talking as a Leftist and acting as a Rightist", in the words of Subhas Chandra Bose. Shri Jaiprakas Narain seemed to have been taken in by the apparent threat that the Congress will become much weaker by the denial of the services of so many leaders and Gandhiji. A lesson should have been taken out of past experience. Similar arguments were advanced in opposing the amendment moved by Subhas Chandra Bose in the Calcutta Congress to the resolution moved by Mahatmaji for the acceptance of the Nehru constitution. It was the same old story. The basic idea of such a conclusion is a reflection on the *bona fides* of the leaders and Gandhiji. Theirs is a mission to serve the Congress and the country under all circumstances.

After Tripuri

One cannot close the chapter of Tripuri without mentioning that though Mahatmaji had broken his fast at Rajkot four days before the session of the Congress the repeated appeals of the President from his sick-bed to come to Tripuri to clear up the situation were fruitless. Had any other person acted in such a way, he would have come in for much public criticism but it was Mahatmaji who in public estimation is above criticism.

Sadly had Subhas Chandra Bose to write. "The blind followers of the Mahatma could not be expected to criticise him and those who were not his orthodox followers had no influence on him regardless of their character, wisdom or experience."

After the Tripuri session, Subhas Chandra Bose remained confined in bed for some time and stayed with his brother Shri Sudhir Chandra Bose at Jamadoba (near Dhanbad) in Bihar where he was taken down on his way back. As soon as he felt a little better he started correspondence with Gandhiji to give effect to the Pant Resolution. In spite of everything, he approached the subject with commendable fairness and the best of intentions. The intransigence of those whose reciprocity would have solved the deadlock frustrated his efforts. The net result was that the Pant Resolution —to some very important, to others equally notorious—became a dead letter. Immediately before the Calcutta session of the All-India Congress Committee in April, 1939, the President once more made earnest and repeated efforts in his visits to Mahatmaji, who had come down and was staying at Sodepur, a few miles from Calcutta, to secure his co-operation to make the resolution effective. He even went so far as to offer a complete surrender of his will to Mahatmaji in the selection of the members of the Working Committee but the same proved abortive.

When the session of All-India Congress Committee commenced at Calcutta in a tense atmosphere, the public still retained a ray of hope that a way will ultimately be found out of the impasse through the intervention of Mahatmaji; but the stage was set and the drama had to be acted according to plan. Mahatmaji did not even attend the session—momentous though it was.

After a dignified statement of facts before the members of the All-India Congress Committee, Subhas Chandra Bose placed his resignation before the Committee "after mature deliberation in an entirely helpful spirit." The course the proceedings then took was sickening and painful indeed. The way "rulings" were given and the constitution interpreted left no room for any doubt as to the ultimate result. When a suggestion was made and approved by Subhas Chandra Bose to have the election of a new President by the delegates it was ruled out by eminent persons—jurists and constitutionalists—on the ground that there was none in authority who could issue the necessary notices, etc., forgetting the very process by which they had met in session and were asserting their rights. The election of the President in succession to Subhas Chandra Bose was anything but regular and decent. If any authority was wanting, there was nothing to

prevent the All-India Congress Committee to confer it on any person of their choice to issue the notices under the constitution. One seldom comes across such pettiness as was exhibited in this session in striking contrast to the admirable dignity maintained by Subhas Chandra Bose. It seemed that the party in power were determined to get rid of Subhas Chandra Bose anyhow, and nothing short of that would satisfy them. In such a process very little heed was paid to decency and decorum. Curious and surprising to many was the fact that of all persons Shri Rajendra Prasad accepted the role which he had to play and the supercession of the claim of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya who had been regarded as "quite fitted for the post", only a few days before!

Right *vs* Left

At a public meeting held in Calcutta on the 6th June, 1939, Subhas Chandra Bose said, "Self-respect, honour and duty towards my country demanded that I should resign, after having made all possible attempts to reach an honourable compromise and avert a conflict within the Congress."

"Between 1936 and 1938, the Left wing of the Congress has grown and developed as a result of co-operation with the Right. In September, 1938, the cry was first raised on behalf of the Right that co-operation with the Left was no longer possible and that the Left was becoming too noisy and troublesome to collaborate with. This new cry ultimately reached its climax in 1939, when the Right wing deliberately decided to end co-operation with the Left. When the All-India Congress Committee met in Calcutta on the 29th April, 1939, to settle this problem of the new Cabinet or the Working Committee, it was found that the Left wanted to co-operate with the Right and their slogan was that of a composite or mixed Cabinet. The Right, however, were not prepared to co-operate with the Left and their slogan was that of a homogeneous Cabinet. Consequently, it was the Rightists who ended compromise, co-operation and unity"—so summed up Subhas Chandra in the first issue of "Forward Bloc." It would not be out of place here to mention that at the conference held in March, 1938, at Delang of the "Gandhi Seva Sangha"—described by Subhas Chandra Bose as "the steel-frame of the majority party"—it was decided to launch an offensive against the Left.

Another fact, like many that happened at the time, needs no comment. Although Subhas Chandra Bose could not secure the co-operation of Mahatmaji to give effect to the Pant Resolution, the hand of co-operation was warmly extended the moment Shri Rajendra Prasad stepped in.

Rabindranath's Attitude

The treatment meted out to Subhas Chandra Bose by his opponents in political ideology evoked legitimate indignation even in the noble heart of Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore. It came to light the other day that he had decided to invite Subhas Chandra Bose to Santiniketan and to present him with an address. He wrote out the address and had it ready in print in May 1939. However, the function was not held and the address was not circulated till it was published on the birthday anniversary of the Poet on the 8th May, 1946. The Poet's feelings, his criticism and the picture drawn by him of the situation, and his admiration of the qualities and work of Subhas Chandra Bose are well worth recalling in his own inimitable language:

"A suicidal mania seems to be prevalent in our society that takes a peculiar pleasure in sapping the strength of the country by insidious dealings and all this at a time when it should be our duty to justify our existence before the doubting gaze of the world. Wearied by the concerted conspiracy of sinister forces both outside and within, we are increasingly losing the vital power to resist them and recover from their attack.

At such a juncture of nationwide crisis, we require the service of a forceful personality, the invincible faith of a natural born leader, who can defy the adverse fate that threatens our progress.

Subhas Chandra, I have watched the dawn that witnessed the beginning of your political *Sadhana*. In that uncertain twilight there had been misgivings in my heart, and I had hesitated to accept you for what you are now. Now and again I have felt hurt by stray signs of weakness and irresolute hesitancy. Today you are revealed in the pure light of midday sun which does not admit of apprehensions. You have come to absorb varied experience during these years. Today you bring your matured mind and irrepressible vitality to bear upon the work at hand. Your strength has sorely been taxed by imprisonment, banishment and disease, rather than impairing; these have helped to broaden your sympathies enlarging your vision so as to embrace the vast perspective of history beyond any narrow limits of territory. You did not regard apparent defeat as final; therefore, you have turned your trials into your allies. More than anything else, Bengal needs today to emulate the powerful force of your determination and your self-reliant courage.

As I feel that you have come with an errand to usher a new light of hope in our motherland, I ask you to take up the task of the leader of Bengal and ask my countrymen to make it true.

* * * *

Long ago at a meeting I addressed my messuage to the leader of Bengal who was yet to seek. After a lapse of many years I am addressing at this meeting one who has come into the full light of recognition. My days have come to their end. I may not join him in the fight that is to come. I can only bless him and take my leave, knowing that he has made his country's burden of sorrow his own, that his final reward is fast coming as his country's freedom."

The great Poet was not only giving vent to his injured feelings and sentiments but was reflecting the heart of many a thinker. The seer's prophecy, how true and how nobly expressed in sad contrast to the denunciations and insinuations poured forth out of jealousy and political rivalry which one came across those days!

Inauguration of Forward Bloc

The evening after the conclusion of All-India Congress Committee Session, Subhas Chandra Bose and some of his friends met and discussed the future programme. After much deliberation it was decided that the "Forward Bloc" should be constituted as a platform, functioning as an integral part of the Congress, to rally all radical and anti-imperialist elements in the country on the basis of a minimum programme, representing the greatest common measure of agreement amongst radicals of all shades of opinion. Subhas Chandra Bose considered the formation of the Forward Bloc as a historical necessity, and so it was. At a public meeting held in Calcutta two days afterwards Subhas Chandra Bose announced the decision. The announcement immediately struck the imagination of the vast gathering who expressed their whole-hearted approval of and enthusiasm over the proposal.

The Right-wing Congressmen felt apprehensive, the more so on account of the tremendous mass popularity of Subhas Chandra Bose. A systematic and inspired propaganda was started against the move. The slogan was "Unity within the Congress." Curiously enough Shri Jaiprakas Narain, forgetting many things, joined in the chorus of condemnation. The conclusion is irresistible, but it may better be left to imagination.

Subhas Chandra Bose undertook an extensive tour over the country and in the meetings convened at various places and attended by immense numbers, he put forward his proposal for the formation of the Forward Bloc which met with enthusiastic response.

At the All-India Conference of the Forward Bloc held at Bombay on the 22nd and 23rd June, 1939, presided over by Subhas Chandra Bose the

constitution and the programme of the Forward Bloc was adopted. The constitution made it clear that it is an organisation within the Indian National Congress which is to serve as a common platform for all Left elements inside the Congress and the aim is the same as that of the Congress. Only primary members of the Congress were eligible to the membership of Forward Bloc.

The more important items of the programme of the Forward Bloc are worth quoting here verbatim :

"(1) While every Indian should have full freedom of religious worship, religion and mysticism should not dominate politics and political affairs. Political affairs should be guided by political, economic and scientific considerations only.

(2) Strenuous efforts should be made to fight provincialism and communalism which have been accentuated since the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy.

(3) Any corruption that may exist today among Congressmen—whether it be the result of an attempt to capture the Congress machinery or whether it has appeared in the wake of office acceptance—should be ruled out.

(4) The Congress should be freed from the influence of the vested interests and from the domination of the Congress Ministries. Democracy should be restored within the Congress and should replace the present authoritarian policy. Simultaneously, the Congress organisation throughout the country should be radicalised and activised."

BAN ON CRITICISM OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION

At the All-India Congress Committee meeting held immediately after the Forward Bloc Conference at Bombay, two resolutions of considerable importance to future events were passed—one prohibiting individual Satyagraha in the Provinces without the sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee and the other directing reference to the Parliamentary Subcommittee of any difference arising between the Congress Ministries and Provincial Congress Committees and prohibiting public discussions of the same. Both the resolutions bore the hall-mark of the authoritarian tendency of the Congress Executive and unqualified support of the Congress Ministries who were then the mainstay of the Congress High Command. Already there was considerable discontent in some of the Provinces where Congress

Ministries were functioning regarding their policies and the method of their working. Being unable to have the grievances of the Kisans redressed, the Kisan movement was being pushed on and gaining force particularly in Bihar, under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. Opposition had to be stifled and the resolutions were the first weapons in the attack. The resolutions were strongly opposed by Subhas Chandra Bose, Swami Sahajananda and some others but as they had been sponsored by the Congress High Command and had the full support of the Congress Ministries, they were passed. Subhas Chandra Bose truly appreciating the far-reaching effect of the resolutions called on his countrymen to hold meetings of protest on the 9th July, 1939. Exception was taken by the Congress President, who asked the meetings to be called off. The correspondence that followed between the Congress President and Subhas Chandra Bose and the reasonings of Subhas Chandra Bose are illuminating. The threats held out were of no consequence to Subhas Chandra Bose and it should have been known. When the matter was placed before the Working Committee it conveniently forgot the conduct of the very members, who sat in judgment, in the past when they found themselves in the minority. It passed a resolution on the 11th August, 1939, virtually expelling Subhas Chandra Bose from the Congress organisation for 3 years. What was virtue in the case of some of the members of the Congress High Command with the blessings of Mahatmaji became an intolerable crime in the case of Subhas Chandra Bose. It was indeed an amazing performance. In indignation many felt at the time that the ethical significance of discipline and the elementary principle of individual right of freedom could not have been twisted and trampled in a lighter vein. Subhas Chandra Bose, the idol of the masses, had anyhow to be made a villain of the piece.

Subhas Expelled from Congress

Did they succeed? Let his countrymen answer. In trying to heap insults on Subhas Chandra Bose they only insulted their intelligence. In cooler moments they must have seen things in their proper perspective. Truly has Subhas Chandra Bose said: "In public affairs we are sometimes inclined to lose not only our sense of reality but our common sense as well." Even Mahatmaji in his discourses had freely conceded such right to agitate and canvas public opinion. When it came to be considered in the case of Subhas Chandra Bose it was a different thing. The decision of the Working Committee had not the desired effect on Subhas Chandra Bose. "I welcome the decision of the Working Committee virtually

expelling me from the Congress for 3 years. This decision is the logical consequence of the process of "Right consolidation" which has been going on for the last few years and which has been accentuated by the acceptance of Ministerial office in the Provinces": commented he. In spite of everything Subhas Chandra Bose remains what he was—the very emblem of youth and vitality in the service of his motherland.

The process of "Right consolidation" now required that the Congress organisation in Bengal should be rid of the associates and followers of the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose. The task was achieved before the year was out, but that is another sordid episode in the national history. It was easy to rally round the discontented elements belonging to different groups, having very little in common except the will to seize power, and place themselves, though in a hopeless minority in office and power. Cabal succeeds for a time but not for all times.

Subhas Chandra Bose continued his activities with unabated energy and vigour in the cause of the country, of the Congress in general and of the Forward Bloc in particular, making direct approach to the masses, in numerous meetings addressed by him.

Ramgarh Forward Bloc Conference

The Forward Bloc decided to hold a conference at Ramgarh immediately before the open session of the Congress there in March, 1940. The conference was very largely attended and attracted delegates from all parts of the country. The Kisans who had shouted themselves hoarse—"Dominia Raj Barbad" (Dominion form of Government be doomed) at every meeting held and addressed by Subhas Chandra Bose, assembled in huge numbers to accord him a unique reception and to hear their idol address the nation. The conference was a remarkable success, and in sad contrast, the open session of the Congress was a dismal failure. In spite of the preparations, the trumpeting propaganda and the Ministerial support it ended in a catastrophic condition in torrential rain and the opposing elements of nature.

Immediately after the last war had broken out, Subhas Chandra Bose expressed his unequivocal opposition to India's participation in the war efforts which he declared was an imperialist war and advocated the launching of a movement to wrest "all power for the people." He addressed mass-gatherings on the subject. But before long he found himself behind prison-bars. It took two years for the Congress to give the lead to the country.

Holwell Monument Agitation

The Holwell monument erected at the crossing in the north-west corner of Dalhousie Square to commemorate the exploded historical myth of Black Hole Tragedy supposed to have taken place in the time of Nawab Seraj-uddowla and which had of late come in for much bitter criticism, engaged the attention of Subhas Chandra Bose. He felt sore that the Muslim League Ministry which was in office had not done anything so far to right the wrong done to the memory of the last of the independent Nawabs of Bengal in spite of the public feeling on the subject. He decided upon a "Satyagraha" for the destruction or removal of the marble column erected at such a prominent place which was a source of constant irritation to the Indians who passed by. He announced his intention to lead the "Satya-graha" on the 3rd July, 1940. The day previous he was taken into custody from his residence at 38|2, Elgin Road, Calcutta, by the order of the Government of Bengal under the Defence of India Rules and removed to the Presidency Jail. In spite of his arrest, "Satyagraha" was started and continued, and after a week, the monument had to be removed to the compound in the Church in Hastings Street away from the public gaze.

While still in jail Subhas Chandra Bose was elected uncontested to the Legislative Assembly from the Dacca constituency in October, 1940.

While still in detention two prosecutions were launched against him—one in the Court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta and the other in the Court of the Magistrate of Alipore for his speeches and writings in the "Forward Bloc"—the weekly paper started by him. Bail applications were refused and he was continued in detention. In November, 1940, he addressed three memorable communications to the authorities that unless he was set free he would commence a fast unto death on the 26th November, 1940. The fast commenced on the date. In view of the quick deterioration of his physical condition he was released on the 5th December, 1940, and brought to his residence.

Vithalbhai Patel's Will

In October, 1940, the curtain was dropped on the controversy regarding the Will of the late Shri Vithalbhai Patel. On the 2nd October, 1933, Shri Vithalbhai Patel made his Will in Switzerland. He had appointed Mr. Govardhanbhai I. Patel and Dr. Purshottamdas T. Patel to be the executors. After making four minor gifts he directed that "his assets after disposal of the abovementioned four gifts was to be handed over to Mr. Subhas

Chandra Bose, to be spent by him or by his nominee or nominees according to his instructions for the political uplift of India preferably for publicity work on behalf of India's cause in other countries." In his Will he also expressed the desire that in case of his death in Europe, Subhas Chandra Bose should take charge of his body and make necessary arrangements for sending it to Bombay for cremation on the Choupaty sands alongside the place where the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's body was cremated. Shri Vithalbhai Patel died at Gland in Switzerland on the 22nd October, 1933, and Subhas Chandra Bose fulfilled the desire regarding cremation on the Choupaty sands.

The probate of the Will of Shri Vithalbhai Patel was obtained from the High Court of Bombay on the 21st September, 1934. The payment to Subhas Chandra Bose as directed was delayed and as a matter of fact was never made. At first in the correspondence in the early part of 1935, while Subhas Chandra Bose was still in Vienna, the contention, apparently inspired, was advanced on behalf of the executors that a scheme will have to be framed in the matter and trustees appointed with the approval of the executors before the funds could be paid to Subhas Chandra Bose. They suggested names including that of Mr. M. A. Jinnah out of which the choice of trustees should be made and stated that the executors were entitled to see that the moneys were spent in carrying out the objects of the Will. The contention was untenable and unjustified and the insinuation was unworthy, to say the least. The reflection cast was justly resented by Subhas Chandra Bose and he refused to be coerced. He made it clear that a scheme will be framed after the funds reach his hands and the amount is ascertained and maintained that in view of the clear directions in the Will the question of the appointment of trustees did not arise. He, however, made it clear that he will, when necessary, appoint a consultative committee to assist him in carrying out the directions of Shri Vithalbhai Patel. When the executors were confronted with the direct question whether such proposals were made by them because they had no confidence in Subhas Chandra Bose and wanted to take the matter out of his hands, the executors found themselves at bay and making a *volte face* they took up a different position. It was indeed surprising that the executors and heirs of Shri Vithalbhai Patel should express lack of confidence in Subhas Chandra Bose when the testator himself had implicit and greater confidence in Subhas Chandra Bose. The executors who had up till then been professing their keen anxiety to see that the desires of Shri Vithalbhai Patel should be carried out now raised the contention that the bequest was invalid in law.

It was clear that the underlying motive was to baffle and frustrate Subhas Chandra Bose in every possible way, and it gave an indication of the conditions under which Subhas Chandra Bose had to work as the President of the Congress. The executors put the matter into Court on the 25th January, 1939, when the controversy regarding the Presidential election was in full force. Mr. Justice Wadia of the Bombay High Court held the bequest to be void and that the heirs of Shri Vithalbhai Patel were entitled to the amount. The matter went up in appeal but the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Kania confirmed the judgment of the original Court on the 28th September, 1939. Subsequently, in October, 1940, Shri Vallabhbhai Patel on behalf of himself and the other heirs of Shri Vithalbhai Patel sent a cheque for Rupees One Lac, representing the amount which had been bequeathed, to Moulana Abul Kalam Azad for acceptance by the Working Committee and for the appointment of a Committee consisting of himself, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, Shri Bhulabhai Desai and the President "with full authority to spend the amount in such manner and for such purposes as the Committee may think fit." The letter of acceptance of Moulana Abul Kalam Azad contained the suggestive insinuation that the contentions advanced to defeat the directions of Shri Vithalbhai Patel were due to the anxiety to see that the fund was applied "to the purpose intended." A question may very well be asked—is such anxiety apparent in the letter of Shri Vallabhbhai Patel and was it real or justified ?

Mahajati Sadan

Shortly after the release of Subhas Chandra Bose in March, 1937, some of his friends met in a conference and decided to raise a fund called "Subhas Congress Fund" and present it to Subhas Chandra Bose to be applied by him for erecting a building in Calcutta which would have accommodation for the Provincial Congress organisation and for Congress work. A committee was constituted for the purpose. The necessity for a big hall in Calcutta with sufficient accommodation for a big gathering where meetings and conferences could be held was pressing. Gradually the idea developed in the mind of Subhas Chandra Bose to have a magnificent building with the nucleus of the Fund. It is to have a big hall with a stage which could accommodate at least 2,000 persons and accommodation for a big library as also for the office of the Provincial Congress Committee and a gymnasium for the physical culture of the youth of the locality. The heavy costs for such a building did not trouble Subhas Chandra Bose who was confident of public response to the appeal for the necessary funds.

He applied to the Corporation of Calcutta on the 19th July. 1938, for a lease of a plot of land in Chittaranjan Avenue for the purpose, and the Corporation of Calcutta by its resolution passed on the 3rd August, 1938, agreed to grant the lease. Plans were prepared for the building suitable for the ambitious scheme of Subhas Chandra Bose and necessary sanction for the erection of the building was obtained. Poet Rabindranath Tagore was approached to lay the foundation stone of the building, "Mahajati Sadan", who out of his boundless love and affection for Subhas Chandra Bose and admiration for the qualities of his head and heart readily agreed to do so in spite of his ill health and the inconvenience

The date for the ceremony was fixed for the 19th of August, 1940. Immediately prior to that the Working Committee had passed the resolution practically expelling Subhas Chandra Bose from the Congress. Discontented elements working against him in Bengal did their best at the last moment to dissuade the Poet from participating in the function which even worried Subhas Chandra Bose but, alas, their attempts failed. In a big pandal erected at the site for the function, the public of Calcutta once more heard the sweet and encouraging voice of the Poet when he read his speech on the occasion following the stirring address of Subhas Chandra Bose requesting the great Poet to lay the foundation stone of "Mahajati Sadan"—the "House of the Nation" the feeling words of Subhas Chandra Bose still ring in our ears—"Gurudev, we welcome you as the high priest in today's national festival, proceed to lay with your hands the foundation stone of "Mahajati Sadan." Give your blessings so that we may be able to make this the "House of the Nation" the living centre of all those beneficent activities which will bring emancipation of the individual and of the nation, as well as the all-round development of India's manhood and nationhood. Bless us that we may hasten along the path that will lead to India's liberty and to our national self-fulfilment."* Subhas Chandra Bose's dream and the Poet's sayings—"Today in this great Hall of India we shall lay the foundation of Bengal's prowess but our strength will not lie in arrogant nationalism, suspicious of friends and foes. We shall invoke Bengal's magnanimous heart of hospitality in which our humanity has liberation; we shall seek freedom in many-sided co-operation"—remain unfulfilled. The function was unique and will be remembered long by those who were present.

The work of the construction of the building was started shortly afterwards and continued until it had to be stopped as a result of the proceedings taken by the Government after the disappearance of Subhas Chandra

Bose. The proceedings are still pending. Let his countrymen fulfil the dream at the earliest possible opportunity.

Flight of Subhas

On the 16th of January, 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose declared his intention of secluding himself in his bedroom, observing silence and contacting nobody for some days. In the evening of the 26th January, 1941, his countrymen were startled by the news of his mysterious disappearance, although the house and its approaches were closely watched day and night. How he had escaped and whither had he gone remained a complete mystery until he was heard over the Radio in the evening of the day when the morning newspapers flashed a message of his death in an aeroplane crash in the Far East.

The history of subsequent events will have to be recorded when we have from Subhas Chandra Bose his account of the same. Let us look forward for the day and pray it that it be nearer than may be expected.

Many with a sad heart and sheer disgust had to tolerate the calumny and the hymn of hatred preached against him. Opportunists had their day. "Fifth columinist", "traitor to the country's cause" were expressions one heard being used with levity even by responsible Congressmen. Those who knew him better would have very much liked those gentlemen to suspend their judgment and not take the cue from foreign and imperialist propaganda. Perhaps, it was a game in party politics. But such a sacrifice and suffering should be above the pettiness of party politics. We must admire where admiration is due.

When in spite of the "black out" of news facts gradually came to be known, the very name of Subhas Chandra Bose—"Netaji"—became a source of inspiration. Hearts are full of confidence in his leadership. The glory transcends the peak eclipsing every thing. Trust has replaced mistrust and jealousy has given place to affection and admiration. Erstwhile opposition has changed to unbounded sympathy. The country worships the hero of heroes.

His Synthetic Mind

To those who have had the opportunity of following the activities of Subhas Chandra Bose from close quarters, to study the expression of his ideas, principles and programmes, and above all in coming in close contact with him, his ideology made the strongest appeal. To others, it may have appeared enigmatic on occasions, his speeches contradictory, his methods

problematic and his activities perplexing. Doubts were expressed. Does he believe in Fascism ? Is he an adherent of Communism ? Subhas Chandra is not a believer in the efficacy or efficiency of either to achieve our ideal. In his own words, he is a believer in *Samyavad*—the doctrine of synthesis or equality. His vision of the future—India will produce a synthesis of all that is good in the progressive political philosophy of the world, be it fascism, communism or parliamentary democracy. He is no believer in mystic doctrinism. A thorough student of logic and philosophy he could not be so. He is immensely proud of our ancient traditions and culture but is not prepared to stick to the same like a fundamentalist. His glowing revolutionary spirit and scientific outlook urge him to march on leaving the past behind, though the path may be long and full of thorns. There can be no obstacles to stop the march. Onward he will go; there may be hurdles to cross but he shall reach his goal. It may be delayed. It cannot be denied. He will not go alone but will take his countrymen with him. There may be strugglers but he will not leave them behind; he will collect them and make them march with him. By his courage, sincerity, service and faith he inspires all. His love, his feelings and purity will attract all—be it today, tomorrow or the day after.

Subhas Chandra Bose is a "Sannyasi" a "Karmajogi". He is a votary of *Sakti,* at the same time a living example of the Vaishnabic principles of endurance, humility and respectfulness. The "Upanishads", the "Tantras", the "Gita", the "Chandi", the teachings of Ramakrishna and the writings of Swami Vivekananda, the theories of western philosophers like Kant, Hegel, Bergson made deep impressions on him and left their impress in his life. He is a leader of thought and action. In working under hopelessly adverse circumstances Subhas Chandra Bose excels himself. The indomitable spirit will survive all evils. We had enough testimony how the spirit can subdue the physical ills. We shall have further testimony. Through trials and travails, prosecutions and persecutions, he has maintained the reckless abandon of vigorous youth in the service of the motherland. We are proud of Subhas Chandra Bose—his smiling face, affectionate manners, noble bearing, and above all his dynamic personality.

AN ADVENTURE OF LIFE

By SATYA RANJAN BAKSI

In one of his essays W. B. Yeats suggests that all great literature is a Myth. It creates and it interprets. It not only represents, but it expresses. It catches, and it throws up, the shining of the Idea. It holds the mirror up to Nature, and it is Nature. It is individual, and, therefore, it is most truly universal. All this is true of great literature as it is true of great men. The great man represents an age and creates an epoch. If anything, most truly he is himself. He comes very near to the thing-in-itself. Beyond all the muddy vestures of decay, beyond all the trappings of nature and society and the manner of the age, he creates his own Myth. He is both body and soul. By so much as a hint here, by a suggestion there, by a mighty gesture. in a daring dream, in the utter recklessness of a thought, in the adventure of an idea, in an abandon of self-projection, he catches, and he throws up, the shining of the Idea. He becomes himself and utters his own soulful music. He creates his own vogue. We say, it is Platonism, it is Gandhism, Leninism. And we do not say in reference to the Henrys and the Georges of the world that it is Henry-ism and George-ism. The Henrys and the Georges are hardly ever individuated—they belong to the crowd, to the trapping. to the background and the foreground. If and when so far as they are individuals, they exist, like Robinson Crusoe, in islands of their own, in their own confused, unintelligible little worlds and fade out in their own inanity. They have not thrown up the bridge for the High Way of Life. They have not created their Myth, and carried their meaning. The shades of the prison-house have always closed on them

When the news of Netaji's death was flashed across to this country, a friend made this short valedictory comment to a press interviewer: "Now He Belongs to History." The knowing friend meant more than what met the ear. Maybe he said more than he intended to. Subhas Chandra Bose has created his own Myth. He has become a legend, a legend and an allegory, a Poem of thought, feeling and action—an interpretation of Life. More sympathetic friends have begun to talk of Subhasism. What then is the pass-word of that life, the key to an interpretation of that life ? Is there a light that should illumine the cosmos of that great Drama? Social philosophers have often described the destructive aspects of science, and have said that the fire which rages within a tiny bit of matter may lift its devouring energy to the surface of our planet, and transform it into one



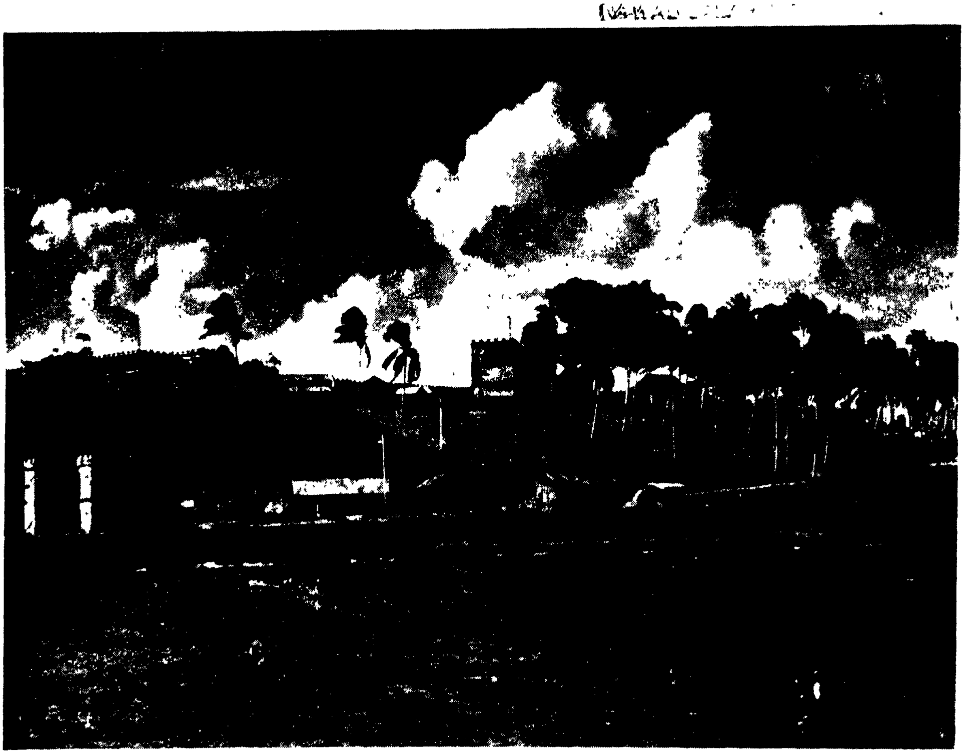
Flag hoisting ceremony in the Andamans Dec., 1943



Col Loganadhan along with some Indian Independence League officers, Sanghai, Sept '43



Maj Gen. Loganadhan delivering speech in the Andamans after taking over the Governorship of the Island



The Andamans from the Sea

wide and wasting volcano. The exhalation of noxious air from below may impart a virulence to the air that is around us, and the whole of animated Nature may wither, and die under the malignity of a tainted atmosphere. A spark from somewhere may be blown into fragments. The destructive fury of imperfect sympathy and malicious criticism is no less violent than this evil death-dance of the destructive orgies of Science's Frankensteins. Subhas Chandra Bose has foı the most part of his active life worked and lived in the exhalation of noxious air, under the malignity of a tainted atmosphere. Malice—and imperfect sympathy—is obscuring; it scatters hell's dun smoke around life's high way—and it produces more heat than light. The splendour that is Subhas Chandra Bose, the glory that is Netaji, the spell, the hypnotism that is the I.N.A., are all blinding. The white light of truth has to be seen and understood in life's many colours, and one can only read into the open book of the Myth of Subhas Chandra Bose when one goes to it in calm self-possession and is prepared to withdraw the veil of enchantment that has surrounded that life.

Propagandists and partisans have of late sought to canvass the support of Netaji's great name to the bluntness of their own casual creeds and light half-beliefs. Is Netaji a Fascist ? Is he a Marxist ? As if a great life can be put into the strait-jacket of a well-trod and out-moded "ism", and life itself woven into one or two finished patterns! For Subhas Chandra Bose life never was a beaten track—it was a great Adventure where one really may meet a giant in a windmill; it is an Odyssey in Pursuit of the unknown. For one thing, he has never "arrived", he has never rested on his oars or rusted in disuse. He has the approach as he once confessed, of a pragmatist, seeking and finding new norms for ever and ever; he is an activist, following ungrudgingly and indefatigably the slogan of Bergson—"Act as men of thought, think as men of action." Stagnation has no appeal for him; for him life is not perfect but is perfectible. Bertrand Russell has found the creeds of disobedience—"without rebellion, making would stagnate, and injustice would be irremediable. The man who refuses to obey authority has, therefore, in certain circumstances, a legitimate function, provided his disobedience has motives which are social rather than personal." Subhas Chandra Bose has confronted the great enigma of life as a crusader, a true believer in the perfectibility of man, and therefore as an unbeaten and unashamed Revolutionary. And in the works of the revolutionaries the struggle is glorified and the man who struggles. Do we like the struggle for its own sake ? No, the struggle is a political means, as politics is a means too. Without the struggle, without

politics we are the iron on which the hammer is beating. But we must become the hammer that shapes the iron. It is this revolutionary, when the buds of thought and feeling were unfolding, petal by petal, in early youth, who was lured into the great Odyssey of the soul in the inspiration of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and heard the call of the Himalayas. And when across hills and dales and rivers and plains the Himalayas wafted their message of the abandon of life, of utter selflessness, of renunciation and service, the cosy affections of home and home-bred virtues became as nought for him. He heard the music of joy abroad, in the air and in the sky. And it is this revolutionary again who forsook the known security of life in the plunge of a political upheaval promised by the Non-co-operation Movement, "to become the hammer that shapes the iron."

"Never think" he once wrote to a friend from the Mandalay prison, "never think that my vision is narrow or cramped. I do indeed believe in the greatest good of the greatest number. But that good I do not see in fancy as a purely material one. Economists say that every human activity is either productive or unproductive. But what is really productive gives rise to furious logomachies. I for one cannot look upon art and its kindred activities as unproductive nor despise philosophic contemplation or spiritual quest as futile and pointless." If he shrank from the barrenness of material values, he has never lined up with the fashionable crowd of star-gazers to look at life through the coloured glass of art and aestheticism and be content with their roseate hues. His life, as Blake said of Love, was a red, red rose, dancing in the air and after frightening in its prospect. Life is not all pink and soft breeze. The view of life, "the one that appeals to me most and which in my view approximates to reality more than any other—is the Hegelian Dialectic. (Not the Marxist) Progress is neither unilinear, nor is it always peaceful in character. Progress after all takes place through conflict. Out of the conflict between thesis and antithesis, synthesis is born. This synthesis in its turn becomes the thesis of the next phase of evolution. This thesis throws up an antithesis and the conflict is resolved by a further synthesis. Thus the wheels of progress move on and on." Life is thus perfectible, not perfect and can never be iron-clad in a finished pattern. It is the crusade for freedom that counts, that great adventure, the experience of *ananda*, sheer causeless delight that should quicken every drop of our blood, because we only create in the fulness of *ananda*. It is the ideal of the Karmajogin that has led him—on, on, for ever on, to tread the path of self-unfoldment, it is the idealism of the activitist, of the realist, of Vivekananda, of Mazzini.

Here is a quotation from the "Life of Lenin."

"Lenin was impatient to return to Russia to take a direct part in the revolutionary events. In Switzerland he felt like a caged lion. 'What a torture it is for all of us to be here at a time like this', he wrote. But it was not an easy task to get out of Switzerland. It was impossible to travel through the Entente countries, for all efforts to obtain permission to do so had failed. It became obvious that Great Britain had no intention of allowing such an implacable enemy of imperialist war as Lenin to leave Switzerland. All sorts of plans for returning home occurred to Lenin, but they all proved to be impracticable, and extremely hazardous. He decided to take advantage of the antagonisms in the imperialist camp and to return to Russia *via* Germany."

The quotation speaks for itself and carries its own meaning. Art, as idealism, must wilt when it is sundered from the life-soil of reality. Woe unto the individual, and unto a nation, when the isthmus between Life and Ideal is hewed away either by the avidity of the merely material life or the fogginess of the idealist day-dreaminess. "Considering everything," Subhas Chandra Bose once wrote, "one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world history will produce a synthesis between communism and fascism. And will it be a surprise if that synthesis is produced in India"? Was it a mere eclecticism that he was advocating ? Whether one believes in the Hegelian or in the Bergsonian or any other theory of evolution—in no case need we think that creation is at an end, and that the last chapter has been written out for the great drama of human thought and vision. Netaji believes, to use Emerson's language, in the moulding from within. Out of the travail of one's soul one must write out one's song of life. And a nation also. Has the great Revolutionary, we ask, in the Adventure of his life scaled the height of thought or action? Or, the moving drama yet moves on, adding new scrolls to the legend that is Subhas Chandra Bose, to the Myth that is Netaji? Let us conclude with a quotation without comment from Goethe's *Poetry And Truth.*

"Our wishes are presentiments of the capabilities which lie within us, and harbingers of that which we shall be in a position to perform. Whatever we are able and would like to do, presents itself to our imagination, as lying without us and in the future; we feel a longing after that which we already possess in secret. Thus our eager grasp into the future converts a possibility into the realisation of our dreams."

The idea remains, deathless, undying—and the shining of the Idea.

—*Jai Hind.*

NETAJI IN EAST ASIA

By N. SEN-GUPTA *

There is today a lot of speculations rampant in the country as to whether Netaji is still alive or not. To a large extent this reflects the love and esteem in which the great leader is held by the millions of our country-men and women who seem to have a lingering hope that Netaji will reappear among us as dramatically as he had disappeared. But what counts most in our resurging national life is often disregarded. Is it not much more important for us today to make an honest and practical effort to live up to the great ideals set up by this dynamic personality than to indulge in such idle speculations ? Netaji stood for a practical solution of the communal discord—a solution that was the only guarantee for the lasting happiness of the teeming millions who must be fed, clothed and sheltered. The positive achievements of Netaji's gigantic efforts are as great as they are varied; but their true historical value has not yet been fully assessed. To do so, we have to see him as the leader of the Freedom Movement in East Asia which afforded him some opportunities, though limited and restricted, to translate his ideas into practice.

With the fall of the British power in 1942 in Burma and Malaya, the Indians in East Asia began to organise themselves politically under the leadership of the veteran revolutionary Shri Rash Behari Bose who was then an exile in Japan. After the Tokyo and Bangkok Conferences held in 1942, the work of the organisation of the Indian Independence League and of the Indian National Army went on in earnest all over East Asia with the main object of attaining independence of India.

But before much headway could be made, the organisation experienced a great set-back towards the end of the year and a sense of frustration began to creep in. The colossal task became increasingly too baffling for the regional leadership. There was no question about the burning patriotism and sincerity of purpose of the historic personage, Shri Rash Behari Bose, whose monumental efforts, despite poor health and advanced age, could not but compel our admiration and respect. Having been in exile from India for such a length of time, he was naturally out of touch with the

* Shri N. Sen-Gupta was Secretary of the Reconstruction Department (Azad Hind Dal), at the Rear Head Quarters. Indian Independence League, E. Asia, Singapore. Ed:

country and failed to appreciate the psychology of the present generation. That stood in the way of his becoming an effective leader in that crisis of Asian history. As soon as he realised this, Shri Rash Behari, however, arranged to transfer the leadership to the younger and more capable hands of an all-India figure like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who was then in Berlin. That was the last and probably the most significant service Shri Rash Behari rendered to India. If nothing else was achieved up to that time, at least the life, property and honour of the Indians in East Asia were protected by the lieutenants of Shri Rash Behari Bose during that chaotic period.

Indians in East Asia had always watched with keen interest the colourful career of the President of the Haripura Congress who firmly believed that neither the problem of communalism nor the attainment of independence could be solved till the interested Third Party had quitted India. Everyone had a profound confidence in his dynamic leadership and sincerely believed that he had something up his sleeve. The formation of the Forward Bloc and his mysterious disappearance from India early in 1941 only served to confirm that belief. The "Quit India" resolution passed by the Indian National Congress in August, 1942, greatly enhanced the prestige of this prophetic leader in the eyes of the Indians abroad. In that dark period of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia, Netaji's inspiring speeches over the radio greatly helped to keep the flame burning. At that time Netaji was engaged in similar activities in Europe where also he had raised an Indian National Army, the history of which still remains to be written.

From the beginning of 1943 Indians in East Asia were seething with excitement at the prospect of Netaji's arrival in East Asia to lead the great movement that was being disintegrated. Their dream ultimately came true when on the 2nd July Shri Rash Behari came back to Singapore (then called Shonan by the Japanese) with Subhas—the chosen leader of the people. At the Singapore Conference, held two days later, the supreme leadership of the movement was put on the undisputed and epoch-making leader Netaji. From that memorable day went on the herculean task of the reorganisation and consolidation of the civil and military departments, the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, the launching of the armed struggle and the initiation of the Azad Hind Dal for civil administration and reconstruction work in the liberated areas. It was a well-planned programme and was executed with lightening speed and thorough orderliness, to the wonder of all.

At the very outset Netaji assured the people that if the British could not deceive him, the Japanese could not hope to do so either. He narrated graphically in that connection that "once the old banyan-tree was uprooted, the young sapling would have no chance of taking root." He then explained the nature of the armed struggle that was about to be launched. It was to be a second front in the field of the Indians abroad; the main idea was to stimulate and reinforce the struggle for freedom that was already going on inside the country. As to taking temporary help from other nations, no one could have any objection: even the powerful British could not stand alone without substantial help from France, America and even from their ideological enemy Russia. The real struggle was for the liberation of India and when that was achieved, the Provisional Government would naturally be dissolved to make room for the permanent Government of India to be formed by the people themselves according to their own free choice.

The confidence of the people that had seriously been shaken, was at once restored; and Netaji's clarion call for total mobilisation received a magnificent response from hundreds of thousands of Indians, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex. Money and materials began to pour into the coffers of the Azad Hind Government in an ever-increasing flow. Men and women began to volunteer in tens of thousands to join the Azad Hind Fauz, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and the Azad Hind Dal. Most touching was the spontaneous and phenomenal response of the North Indian *gawallas* and the South Indian rubber-tappers who had implicit faith in Netaji. They donated their cattle, chattels and the savings of life-time to the Azad Hind Fund and joined the Fauz and the Dal. Hundreds of young couples gave their all and joined the army. Theirs was a total sacrifice as demanded by Netaji. Soon the training camps, dotted all over Malaya and other parts of East Asia, were literally packed to capacity and for sheer lack of accommodation and training facilities, thousands had to go away most reluctantly with disappointment writ large on their faces. Such was the unique response that even 60- or 70-year-old men and women wanted to volunteer for active service in the Indian National Army.

Most of the three million Indians in East Asia, men and women, were plantation labourers who were fragments of a submerged humanity. Ignorant and timid as they were, they suffered from a chronic inferiority complex and were easy victims of the caprices of the top-dogs. The Indian labourers were denied the privilege of being useful members of society and were looked down, even by other Asiatic nationals with whom they lived side by side. These persecuted *Klings* and *Bengalees* (terms of

derogation by which Indians from the South and the North are known) were those who, strangely enough, formed the bulk of the Army of Liberation. The political, spiritual and military training that they received in the camps suddenly transformed them into an army of efficient and undaunted men and women, thoroughly conscious of their national destiny and dignity. Not only did they fight valiantly in the battle-fields of the "Indo-Burma front" winning the ungrudging admiration of the tough Japanese soldiers on the one hand and of the haughty British army on the other, but their changed outlook, the new-born sense of prestige and responsibility commanded the respect of all those with whom they came in contact. To-day they have become conscious of their rightful place in society. This is a positive achievement in the development of our national character, the value of which cannot be overestimated.

Like the men and women of the National Army, the children of the Bal-Sena under the instruction of Netaji received a course of spiritual-*cum*-military training that formed an integral part of Netaji's nation-building scheme. The value of imparting truly national education to the youth—the future of the nation—is inestimable, and Netaji gave it the importance that it deserved. When the British Army of Occupation wanted to disband the Bal-Sena in Rangoon, the little soldiers stoutly and fearlessly refused to leave the camp and to return to their parents. Their argument was that Netaji was their father and so they would not go to anybody else except to him.

It is probably the most astounding paradox of the history of this period that a civilian leader had to transform himself into a military strategist by the sheer force of circumstances. He had many able lieutenants who gave brilliant account of themselves as tacticians, but Netaji alone demonstrated the rare genius of a strategist. His achievements could not and should not be measured in terms of success or failure. For, he knew more than anybody else that it was an unequal fight under desperate conditions against the most formidable military Powers. But fight he must, not only for any immediate gain or advantage, but to transform the whole character of his people by organising them into a well-disciplined and self-denying national army. His whole programme of training the National Militia would some day form the basis of the syllabus of our National Military Academies. For, Netaji did not build merely on military efficiency but on the eternal Indian ideals of self-sacrifice in the cause of the unprotected and the persecuted. That was the ideal of the *Kshatriya* in the Heroic Age of India. It found its glorious vindication in the phenomenal career of our great Marhatta

hero Sivaji, and our beloved Netaji, separated though he was by centuries, followed the same lofty ideals and like a true pioneer gave a new orientation to the desperate politics of a degraded nation.

Netaji is perhaps the only leader who has been able to give a practical shape to communal harmony solving the problem of 'communalism'. In the camps, Hindus and Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, all ate together the same food prepared by the same cooks. They lived together like brothers, with one common object—the freedom of India. Nobody bothered about another's religion which was regarded as a purely personal affair. The magic *mantra* of "Jai-Hind" smashed the cordon that separated man from man, and inspired a feeling of unity that stood the acid-test in the battle-fields. Netaji had an essentially pan-Indian outlook which did not know any narrow boundary of region or religion. He could never think of India except as an undivided whole where every person irrespective of caste, creed, religion or sex would get the same privilege and rights. Of course, the absence of an interested third party greatly facilitated this singular achievement which only goes to prove that left to herself India will settle down peacefully and concentrate her energies to constructive work which will make this great land greater and richer providing plenty of food, clothes and other necessaries of life to all Indians and even to their neighbours.

The constructive side of Netaji's programme was not relegated to a distant future but was developed side by side with the Plan of Liberation. In addition to Bal-Sena training centres, national schools were opened where along with general education on a national footing. preliminary military training was imparted. Hindusthani was made the medium of instruction and was given the status of the Indian National Language. A National Planning Committee was formed after the model of the Original Indian Committee organised under the chairmanship of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru when Netaji had been President of the Indian National Congress. Though greatly handicapped by the trend of events and emergency conditions, the work of this Committee went on as fast as was possible under those trying circumstances. Whatever form the permanent Government of India took, it must cater to the basic needs of the common man.

Meanwhile, for the civil administration and reconstruction work in the liberated areas, a special Rehabilitation Department was created. Recruitment and the training of reconstruction workers, *viz.*, Civil Administrators, the Police force, Medical and Health Officers, Health and Sanitary Inspectors, Dressers, Nursing Orderlies, Engineers, Overseers, Mechanics,

Fitters, Carpenters, Engine drivers, etc. etc., were taken on hand by this Department. The training of the volunteers consisted of a refresher-course in the various 'trades', together with a short course of spiritual and military training so as to make them morally fit to work with the fighting units in the zones under all sorts of trying and abnormal conditions. By spiritual training was not meant the sort of training imparted in a monastery; it was a training required to fortify one-self morally for service under war conditions in a devastated area where perhaps the scorched-earth policy had been applied. The workers were going to serve their own people in liberated India and not to rule over a conquered people.

After their training the reconstruction workers were equipped with kits suitable for their special jobs and sent to the front in units (Administrative, Medical, Health, Engineering, etc.) for service in liberated areas as members of the Azad Hind Dal. These A.H.D. workers were expected to take up from the fighting units civil administration and reconstruction work in the war-stricken zones as *sewaks* in the same spirit that actuates the relief-workers to serve in epidemic zones and famine-stricken areas. The immediate duty of the A.H.D. was to clear the debris, mines, unexploded bombs, etc., and to make the area comparatively safe for civil life, restore the water-supply and other public utility services, establish law and order, provide rice and other essential commodities, take health measures for the prevention of epidemics that always come in the wake of a major catastrophe, open centres for medical attention, organise publicity bureaux to propagate the aims and objects of the Provisional Government in order to restore the confidence and morale of the people. Special Postal Stamps and currency notes were prepared by the Azad Hind Government for use in the liberated areas. After bringing the area to a tolerably living condition, the A.H.D. was to proceed further with similar work, leaving the area under a stabler government to be run by the people of the locality.

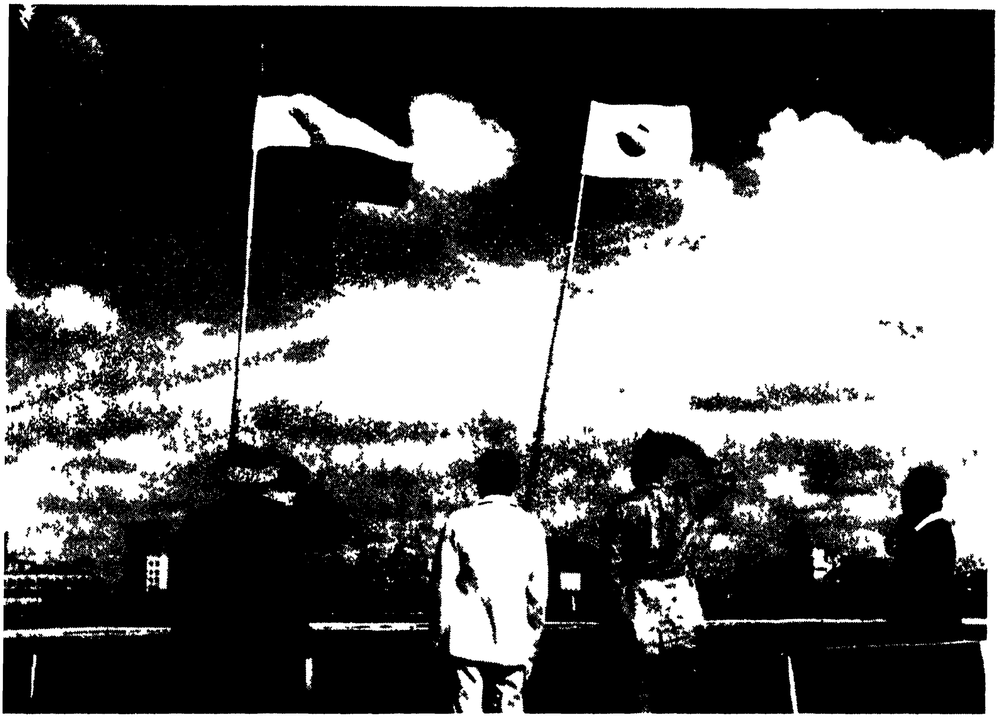
Immediately after the retreat from Burma much against his personal wish, Netaji began to prepare the mind of the people for the second round of the unequal struggle. The first round was no doubt lost, but that did not mean that the struggle was to be given up. Under changed circumstances the nature of this second round was bound to be different and it was up to the Indian National Congress to decide its pace and character. Netaji advised his followers always to look up to this great national organisation—the Indian National Congress—for inspiration and guidance. The consummate politician in him could easily visualize that the end of the war would not directly lead to the end of our troubles. In the post-war chaos

Netaji anticipated an even greater opportunity for the independence of India and appealed to the Congress leaders over the radio not to accept unconditionally and prematurely the Simla proposals of 1945. History will vindicate the prophetic wisdom of this great son of India who staked everything in the cause of Indian Freedom.

"JAI HIND"



Netaji receiving money from Mr Ramkrishna Chairman I I L Andamans 31 12 43



Saluting flags in the Race Course public meeting, Sanghai, Sept. 1943



Dinner Party by Netaji in Andamans



Mass meeting in Singapore, 24th October, 1943 L. to R Netaji, Mr Karim Ghani, Col. Lakshmi, Maj.-Gen. Bhonsley, Col. Ehsan Qadier, Maj.-Gen. M Z Kiani

"JAI HIND! WE'LL MEET AGAIN"

(Netaji's Last Day in Rangoon)

BY K. M. KANNAMPILLY
(GENERAL SECRETARY, INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE, EAST ASIA)

As the old car picked its way along the bomb-cratered road, I could feel the tenseness in the air. Near Tamway people were helping themselves from a Japanese factory. It was a disquieting sight, for I knew from experience that looting once begun was hard to control, and its demoralising effect on the public would be disastrous. Within a couple of days every Indian merchant and householder in Rangoon and suburbs would come running to the Indian Independence League Headquarters, frantically appealing for armed protection. And I would not blame them either—their experience was of the time when the British had evacuated Rangoon in 1942, leaving them unprotected and helpless among a non-too-friendly population. Of course, I knew that, thanks to Netaji and his Government, conditions were not going to be bad this time. I knew that Netaji's brief sojourn in Burma had effected a remarkable change in the attitude of the Burmese towards Indians. I knew all that, but the people did not know, and they would be nervous and come demanding protection.

Columns of dark smoke were already mushrooming skywards from different corners of the city—dismal landmarks of an Army in retreat. For, the Japanese Army was evacuating Rangoon. Most of it had already left, along with Dr. Ba Maw's Government of Independent Burma. The only Government left in the City was the Provisional Government of Azad Hind; the only organisation still functioning, the Indian Independence League; the only Army still intact, the Indian National Army; and the only Head of State, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

And the Provisional Government of Free India was evacuating Rangoon on the night of that twenty-fourth day of April, 1945. Netaji and the Cabinet of the Provisional Government were to have left on the 23rd: but when he heard that the transport arranged for the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had been diverted by the Japanese for their own use, he had refused to leave. Lt.-General Ishoda, the Chief of the Hikkari Kikkan

(Japanese Liaison Department) came, frantic with apologies. Netaji refused even to see him. The Japanese were really worried. A British Tank column was moving fast down the Mandalay-Rangoon Road, and any time Pegu might fall—sealing off the only route of escape from Rangoon. General Ishoda approached senior officers of the I.N.A., pleading with them to persuade Netaji to delay no more.

In the end Netaji agreed to leave Rangoon, if two trucks were provided for the girls—their kit to follow by train. And on that 23rd April night, when their own officers were footing it towards Moulmein, the Japanese did produce the two trucks.

But by then it was too late in the night to start, as they would not be able to reach Pegu before daybreak.

And so Netaji was leaving on the 24th—the last leader to leave Rangoon. I was going down to receive my final instructions. I reached the bungalow; the guard identified me and let the car in. Cars and trucks in camouflage were all over the place; and officers—those who were going as well as those who were not—were sitting about in the portico and the grounds.

Many of them I had met in the very early days, when the Movement was in its infancy. With a few among them I had shared the grim anxiety of crises, of doubts and despair. Along with them I had prayed as early as March, 1942, for the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose in the East. And with them I had worked under Netaji, often too busy with immediate problems to see the greatness of the work or appreciate fully the magnitude and extent of Netaji's plans.

There was Major-General Kiani, sedate, poised, unperturbed. I remembered the first time that we had met, scarcely three weeks after the Union Jack had been lowered in Singapore, and the British Commander had handed over nearly half a lakh of Indian soldiers to the Japanese "like so many sheep." A few representatives of those soldiers and Indian civilians in Malaya were meeting to review the situation and plan the future. And Kiani had come with Mohan Singh. "My name is Kiani," he had introduced himself with a firm clasp of the hand. In the days of enthusiasm that followed, days of hard work willingly, even eagerly, undertaken, we had met often.

Kiani, by then a Colonel in the I.N.A., was the Commandar of the Division that had fought on India's soil. To-day he was leaving with Netaji. Recalling the hopes we had cherished, he repeated the memorable lines of Omar Khayyam :

"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone."

Philosophic words : but the pain was there, throbbing in the voice.

Colonel Gulzara Singh. Sitting on a kit bag, quiet, stoic, with a gentle smile of recognition. We talked of those who were not there—and of whose fate we knew not. There had been many rumours in the town of late; that Shaw Nawaz had been captured and shot, that Seghal had been killed in battle, that Dhillon had committed suicide. Wild rumours, but probable stories. The heaviness of his heart spoke through Gulzara Singh's eyes.

Colonel Mullick, tall, gaunt and stooping, but looking healthier after his recent treatment in Bangkok. He was still good for a joke. The hero of Kohima and Imphal, no fortune of war could crush his good humour.

There were the Indian Independence League Officers. Thivy, going back, only because he would not disobey an order. A more loyal follower of Netaji never had, nor the Indian Independence Movement, a more sincere worker. He hated having to leave behind his colleagues, but the Movement had to be carried on elsewhere, and Netaji was leaving behind only the minimum number of senior Officers to continue in Rangoon. And so Thivy had to go back to Malaya.

Then there was Das, thick-lensed, bald, blunt and good-hearted. In the Movement from the very beginning, he had been one of those who somehow got the hardest breaks. We chatted for a while about the days when he and I had set about organising the Indian Independence Movement Headquarters in Malaya—with a dozen graph books, a packet of lead pencils and three dozen bottles of blue Quink ink. Being soon after the Japanese occupation, it was difficult to get things. The Japanese liaison officers had insisted that they would supply everything—and gravely produced those items of stationery, as all that could be needed for any office! Das and I had been through most of the hard times together: the tense nerve-cracking December days 1942, when the Council of Action resigned; the bitter days of February, 1943, when we were both the special targets of Japanese hatred. Das had been the Secretary of the Council of Action in those days, and I the General Secretary for Malaya.

Captain Sham Sher Singh of Netaji's Bodyguard came to call us up. Netaji was in the Conference Room. There were others too; Ministers of

the Provisional Government, Senior Officers of the I.N.A. and the Indian Independence League.

I watched Netaji's face.

I had watched it the previous day, when he had addressed a mass meeting of Indians in Kamayut, near Rangoon. There were all sorts of rumours in town. The Japanese retreat was no more a secret. The fact that the Burmese Government had evacuated, was already known to most. And in that meeting Netaji had spoken to the thousands of Indians who had assembled, despite the ever-present enemy planes, and given them such confidence and courage, that not one word of doubt in the final victory in our fight for freedom was heard from anyone. He had not misled the people by painting a rosy picture of the situation. He had spoken, and spoken with frankness of the military reverses we had suffered—but it was not the frankness of helpless despair, but the outspokenness arising from cool confidence in final success. And a young Chettiar couple had come forward, as was quite common in meetings addressed by Netaji, to give their gold and jewellery for the nation's cause. This, on 23rd April, when to all those who had eyes to see it was evident that the British would be in Rangoon in a matter of days!

I had watched him then, and I had marvelled at the iron will that could infuse confidence in people when the whole world was crumbling around them; at the indomitable faith in one's own mission that refused to be daunted by any setback.

And how near he had come to achieve that mission! The monsoon a little late in 1944, and India's Flag of Freedom would have been unfurled over Imphal. And today, instead of packing for evacuation, Netaji and his Cabinet would have been in the heart of Hindustan. Probably in Delhi !

His face was calm. The same determined, crisp manner, in which he usually conducted conferences. Every point clear, marshalled in the mind. Every question answered and doubt cleared, without hesitation or pause. It did not take more than ten minutes. And then we withdrew. Netaji went in to pack.

* * * *

I was down with Thivy and Das, when I was called up again after about half an hour. Only those who were to stay back were up in the balcony. This was to be the last time. Netaji was dressed as usual in uniform, wearing the I.N.A. and the I.Y.L. Hqrs. badges. He had a word for each of us. He warned me about the difficulties I might have to

face in keeping the Organisation intact during the coming days. He inquired about funds at my disposal, and gave minute instructions about financial help to be given to various workers of the Movement.

A sepoy came up with some message, and Netaji went in. On coming back he asked me whether the Officers of the Women's Department in the League Headquarters knew of his evacuation. I replied that they had guessed it, and were sad. "There can be no farewell in a Movement like ours," said Netaji.

He was silent for a while. The face softened, and a far-away look crept into those eyes that had never bated before the worst of perils. "I couldn't say good-bye to my mother," it was almost a whisper.

Just then General Chatterji came up to inform that the convoy was formed and ready to move off. We all went down. Netaji shook hands with each of us, and got into the car.

"Jai Hind! We'll meet again!" and the cream-coloured, camouflaged car slid into its place in the midst of the convoy, as Netaji sat back, his eyes already looking ahead—ahead into the next phase of the campaign for his country's freedom

A SCRAP OF THE SUN

By GURDIAL MALLIK

The outer sanctuary of the inner soul situated in the sylvan solitude of the heart of Bengal. Its atmosphere was suffused with cadence and colour. A small room in a mud-built hostel, the walls of which are adorned with several reliefs, symbolical of the varied vigour of life; among these there is a lion in the posture of attack.

The room is bereft of furniture, except for a bedstead but that, too, without even a tattered mattress, but there are intellectual appointments in the shape of books, their themes ranging from mysticism to Machiavellianism, the latter embodied in the political literature of the day with its twin-pronged partisanship and propaganda.

On the bare bed an aged-looking person is lying crumpled up with pain in the style of the Sindh desert. From outside, through the ever-open door, the strains of the conch-shells, evidently welcoming a visitor of distinction,—a victor in the battle of the Divine on behalf of the dust-made man,—greet his ears. Suddenly there is a spell of silence, which is, however, short-lived, for it is broken by a song of the premier poet of the Province, sung in soulful chorus by a group of growing youths with the imprint of the eternal dawn in their eyes.

"I am, indeed, unlucky," soliloquises the suffering old man to himself, "because I shall not be able to have even a glimpse of the great man." He paused for a while, and then added with poignant pathos, "But, then, I have ever missed the bus, bound for the City of Self-fulfilment."

He is again caught up in the coils of his heart-cramps. All becomes dark and dead for him. The brightly-shining sun is blotted out from the sky. The spring-breeze ceases to tingle his blood. The cuckoo sings no more. He has entered the state of coma, when apparently all life comes to a dead stop.

He is till in this comatose condition when a youth walks on tiptoe into the room. And imagining that the inmate is sleeping he whispers into the latter's left ear in the hope that he would be heard, "He has come!"

As if alchemically awakened, the sleeping sufferer begins to stir. Slowly he opens his eyes and looks round to make sure that he has not

been day-dreaming. But he is delightfully disillusioned. For, lo, *he* has actually arrived from the land of longing !

The old man struggles with himself to sit up and salute the august visitor, who has condescended to come to his door. At a flash his memory travels back to the epic age when, in this wise, Sri Krishna honoured Sudama or Sri Ramachandra quickened the stone-turned Ahalya. At once the visitor bends forward with the solicitude of the affectionate mother by the bed-side of the ailing son and pleads with the patient,—so impatient to show reverence to him,—not to trouble himself.

The patient tries to rivet his grateful glance at the visitor, standing nearly straight like a palm-tree, with folded hands in token of the fundamental and foundational fellowship of humanity. He, too, responds in a similar manner.

Hark the boisterous blare of the motor-horn in the midst of this mud-house meeting of a hero of the race with a humble citizen. It was like lightning touching the top of a tree-tryst where two lovers stand face to face, wrapped up in the mantle of midnight meditation and bringing down with a crash the pavilion of their paradise on their love-divinised heads.

Once again the patient is plunged into the paroxysm of pain, and all is dark and dead to him. The stillness of the grave is on him. Only now and again, fitfully, he cries out, "A scrap of the sun!" "A scrap of the sun."

Such is the radiant record of his first and last momentary meeting with Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, in the unwritten autobiography of the writer of this simple tribute to the modern incarnation of the heroes of Rajputana.

OUR NATIONAL FLAG

By PITAMBAR PANT

The Indian National Flag—the tricolour flag—owes as much to Mahatma Gandhi as the present political status of India does to him. But it does not mean that the present Congress tricolour flag has had no background.

THE BACKGROUND

The First Phase

The tumultuous anti-partition agitation in Bengal seriously engaged the attention of Indian patriots and well-wishers of India for a national flag. It is inconceivable to think of a nation without its national flag. So a few Indian patriots and Madame Camaa prepared a tricolour flag in Paris in the year 1905. This flag was first hoisted in Berlin in 1905 and was also used in 1907 in Bengal. Its colours were green, saffron and red arranged horizontally. The green strip had eight lotuses. The saffron strip had the words *Bande Mataram* and on the red strip there was the sun on the extreme left and a little away from the centre on the right there was the crescent. When the anti-partition agitation came to an end, the popularity of this flag faded away. Undoubtedly the flag could not catch the imagination of the people.

The Home Rule agitation of 1915 again brought to the fore-front the question of Indian flag and a new flag was designed and as usual the end of the agitation saw the disappearance of the flag. The chief reason for the appearance and disappearance of a national flag till the year 1920 depended upon certain agitations which did not command the respect of the masses and which were not countrywide.

The Second Phase

The advent of Mahatma Gandhi on the Indian political scene transformed the Indian National Congress into a mass-minded body. The struggle for freedom which had formerly been confined to cities and towns, now filtered down to villages, and under the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the non-co-operation movement started and, like an ocean strewn



with mountainous high waves, the whole of India pulsated with new life and vigour. A new India was coming into being and Mahatma Gandhi felt the necessity of a flag. He wrote that it was necessary for Indians to recognize a common flag to live and die for. Mr. P. Venkayya of the National College, Masulipatam, put before Mahatma Gandhi several suggestions. Mr. Venkayya doggedly persisted in his efforts to design a national flag, but a suggestion from Lala Hansraj of Jullundhur that the spinning wheel should find a place on the Indian National Flag appealed to Mahatmaji. Mr. Venkayya prepared a design of the flag with a spinning wheel on red and green colours indicating a Hindu and Muslim background. Mahatmaji suggested that the background should be white and green and red. The white portion was intended to represent all other faiths. The white colour, moreover, was a symbol of purity and peace. Mahatmaji wrote:—

"The flag must be made of Khaddar, for it is through coarse cloth alone that we can make India independent of foreign markets for her cloth. I would advise all religious organisations, if they agree with my argument to weave into their religious flag a miniature national flag in the upper left-hand corner. The regulation size of the flag should contain the drawing of a full-sized spinning wheel."

An Objection

The Sikh League of the Punjab desired by passing a resolution, the inclusion of their black colour in the proposed national flag. Mahatma Gandhi objected to this demand on various grounds. He clearly set forth his view that he would have had only one colour if it were possible as it was a dangerous thing to over-emphasize our differences or distinctions. At the time when Mahatma Gandhi gave this reply to the Sikh League, he had not brought the flag question before the All-India Congress Committee. But as the flag proposal came from Mahatma Gandhi himself it became popular and began to be used in all Congress meetings. According to Mahatmaji, a national flag only symbolises the nation's collective honour. A nation deserves a flag only when the people constituting that nation are prepared to die in defence of it. All national flags are emblems of the national readiness for sacrifice.

The Fight for the Tricolour Flag

The well-known Nagpur Flag Satyagraha started on account of an objection by the police to a procession carrying the national flag in the

direction of the civil lines of the Nagpur city. With the promulgation of Sec. 144 on the 1st of May, 1923, the volunteers asserted their right to carry the flag wherever they liked. The police started arresting them. A public meeting was held in Nagpur on the 31st May, 1923 and Shri C. Rajagopalacharya delivered a brilliant speech and wholeheartedly supported the Flag Satyagraha Campaign. Rajaji stressed the point that the bureaucratic Government of India did not like the combination of three colours in the Indian National Flag. The Government would not have interfered if a Christian or a Parsee carried a white flag, a Hindu a red flag, a Mussalman a green flag. If Hindus, Christians, Jains and Muslims had fought one another on the way, the bureaucratic Government would have derived added pleasure. But putting these colours together in a flag indicated a great danger to the British Empire.

The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha assumed bigger proportions and was blessed by the Working Committee and later by the A.-I.C.C. In connection with the Flag Satyagraha at Nagpur Seth Jumnalal Bajaj was also arrested and was sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 3,000|-. A very interesting point to bear in mind in this connection was that Seth Jumnalal Bajaj's car was attached for the realisation of the fine and as there was nobody at Nagpur for the purchase of the car, the car was taken to Kathiawar for sale simply because at that time the Government could find a purchaser only in the Indian States in Kathiawar to suit their desires.

The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha soon developed into an All-India Movement and Sardar Ballabhbhai Patel took charge of the movement. Volunteers began to pour in from different parts of India. The Working Committee that met in Vizagapattam in August of the same year paid a handsome tribute to Sardar Patel for the help given in the conduct of the Flag Satyagraha Campaign. A request was also made to him to give proper guidance to the movement conjointly with his redoubtable brother the late Vithalbhai Patel. The Patel brothers guided the campaign creditably and brought the movement to an honourable termination. The Government contended that the processionists should apply for permission and the Congress claimed the right to carry the flag and proceed on any public road without any let or hindrance. This ended the great Nagpur Flag Satyagraha.

The Last Phase

The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha gave a great impetus to the popularisation of the flag. This movement also clarified the interpretation of the various colours, the size, and the Charkha symbol in it. Needless to say,

Congressman began to dislike the communal meaning formerly given to the colours on the flag. Somebody suggested to Mahatmaji that red colour was suggestive of bravery, green of calmness and white of purity. This interpretation of the colours was accepted by Mahatmaji and he wrote that the new meaning, therefore, should set at rest all differences about the colours. As for the spinning wheel he wrote in *Young India*, "I shall be sorry to find anybody objecting to the wheel which means energy, which binds the poor and the rich, and which ever reminds Congressmen that in anything that they may do, they dare not forget the masses."

Several Congressmen continued to give the old interpretation of the three colours notwithstanding the acceptance by Mahatmaji of the new interpretation of the colours of the flag. The Sikhs took up the matter at the Lahore Session of Congress presided over by Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru. The question of any change in the flag was shelved owing to the impending great fight of 1930 and the people had to defend the honour of the flag. Many were killed, hundreds were disabled for life and thousands had to undergo imprisonment.

The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 was a partial success and terminated with the signing of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in March, 1931, and the controversy about the colours of the flag was again raised by the Sikhs at the Karachi Session of the Congress, 1931. The Working Committee therefore resolved at Karachi to appoint a Committee to examine the objections raised to the existing colours on the grounds of their communal basis and to recommend a flag for the acceptance of Congress. The Committee was also authorised to take evidence and send up its report before July, 1931.

After the consideration of the report of the National Flag Committee it was resolved that the national flag shall be three-coloured, horizontally arranged as before but the colours shall be saffron, white and green in the order stated here from top to bottom with the spinning wheel in the centre of the white strip, the colours standing for qualities and not communities. The saffron shall represent courage and sacrifice, white peace and truth and green shall represent faith and chivalry, and the spinning wheel the hope of the masses. The proportion of the flag should be as three to two.

The passing of this resolution brought to an end the great controversy over the colours of the national flag. As the colours were declared by the Congress to have no communal significance, the Sikhs could not raise anymore objections. In this manner India possessed for the first time a national flag of her own with the official sanction of the Indian National Congress.

Gandhiji's views on the decision of the National Flag Committee are worth consideration. He wrote—"It should be remembered, that the white. green and red tricoloured flag was never authoritatively adopted by the Congress. It was conceived by me, and I had certainly given it a communal meaning. It was intended to represent Communal Unity. The Sikhs protested and demanded their colour. Consequently a Committee was appointed. It collected valuable evidence and made useful recommendations. And now we have a flag which has been authoritatively robbed of any communal meaning assigned to each colour. The red has been replaced by saffron colour and is put first purely from the artistic standpoint. White has been put between saffron and green in order to heighten the effect and to show off the whole flag to advantage. The wheel is to be shown on the white strip in blue black. There can be no doubt that this is an improvement. It is a matter of great joy that the wheel has been retained as the hope of the masses. It has proved itself as such. Whereever it has gone, it has brought happiness and banished pauperism. It is now the duty of the Congress workers to explain the meaning of the National flag, and let me hope, that we shall translate the full meaning into our own lives, but its true defence will consist in assimilating the qualities represented by the colours and giving the spinning wheel a place in every home. Then we shall need no picketing of foreign cloth. If we will die for the flag, let us first learn to live for it."

The tricolour flag of the Congress has been a source of inspiration to those who consider the independence of India the most important feature of all progress. The flag has to its credit millions of people who defended its honour, and hundreds have died in holding its dignity since 1920 right up to 1945. Men and women suffered not only imprisonment but met death manfully in defence of the honour of the tricolour flag. The Independence Day on the 26th of January every year since the Lahore Session of Congress in December 1929 has been observed regularly with the hoisting of the National Flag. On the Independence Day millions and millions of Indians have solemnly taken the Independence pledge under this flag. Mahatmaji's birthday and the Jallianwalabagh Day are other important dates on which the flag-hoisting ceremony takes place.

The "Quit India" resolution was passed on the 8th of August. 1942. And on the 9th of August started a movement, unparalleled in our history, for the liberation of India from the clutches of British imperialism. British might tried to crush for ever the spirit of freedom. The imperialistic octopus tightened the grip of its slimy tentacles. The struggle raged furi-

ously and the defenders of the tricolour flag shed their blood and fought on till the British stranglehold was cut and the honour of the flag was restored to its pristine purity and thus the 9th of August has also been added to the sacred days on which the flag-hoisting ceremony takes place. All honour to our Tricolour Flag.

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE—THE SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTIONARY

By SHRI RAM SHARMA

"The men whom God takes as instruments for His great purposes are full of contradictions and mystery. He mixes and unites in them, in proportions deeply concealed, qualities and defects, virtues and vices, enlightenment and error, greatness and weakness; when they have fulfilled their time with the splendour of their deeds and their destiny, they themselves remain hidden in the depth of their fame, admired and abused in turn by the world that knows them not."

Guizot on Cromwell.

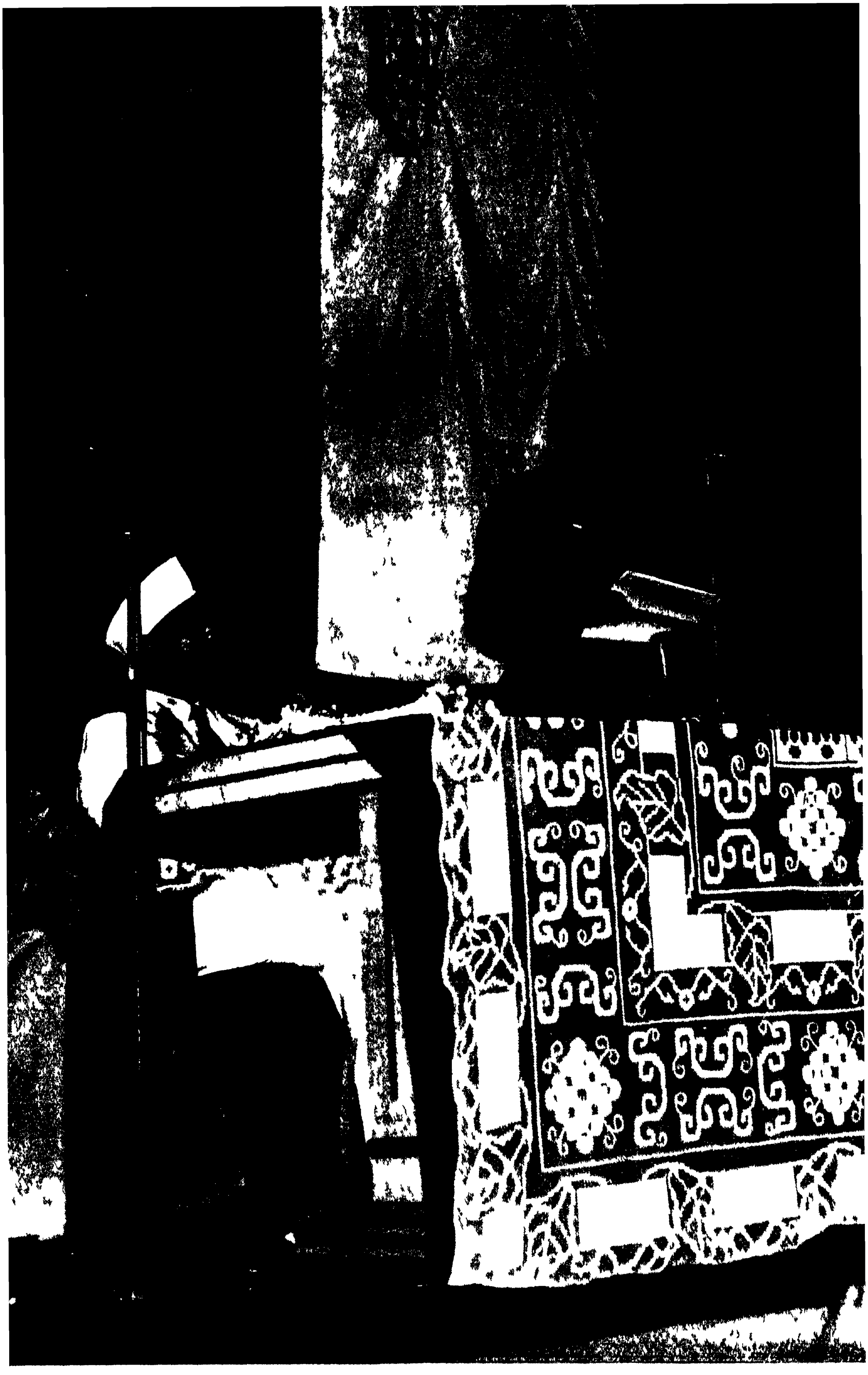
Conditions of Revolutionary Success

In order to understand fully within a short compass whether Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a successful revolutionary or not, one has to put down certain essentials of successful revolutions that have shaken the world. It is true that all revolutions are strewn with the debris of bloodshed, political controversies and reactionary forces. But for a proper grasp of the essentials of a successful revolution, one has to by-pass the details and has to discuss the fundamentals of a successful revolution. It is also a historical phenomenon that "revolutions do not come suddenly and never by chance." The whole course of a revolution is like a battlefield covered with powder and land-mines with a perfect planning. A mere spark ignites the whole thing and an explosion occurs.

Bearing in mind the two successful revolutions, *viz.*, the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution, the following essentials come to the forefront, apart from minor details which may well be discarded for our present study :

(*a*) There must be discontent in the country on a mass scale; without it no political fervour or revolutionary tempo is possible. The discontent should not be superficial and must be based on genuine grievances.





The French and the Russian Revolutions were preceded by a raging wave of discontent amongst the people and distrust of the Governments they wanted to pull down. But mere discontent is nothing. If it were to be the only factor for a successful revolution, revolutions would come in every country more often than not. In India specially, the intensity and magnitude of the discontent against British rule has been perhaps the greatest and deepest, but it could not bring about a revolution.

(*b*) There must be in the country ripe for revolution a dynamic political Party, howsoever small it may be, capable of assuming the reins of Government with radical ideas to fulfil the needs and demands of the country in revolt. It is a wrong presumption that the Party to take over the Government must needs be a large one. The most important point about the Party to take the power in hand is that it should be dynamic, gifted with political sagacity and moral guts to take drastic steps for the restoration of peace and new order. In Russia the Menshevik Party was a very large one and the Bolshevik Party, though proportionately very small, was dynamic and a well-knit body. When the clash occurred between the two, the Menshevik Party was thrown overboard notwithstanding the large number of its members. In India the Congress Party has been no doubt a dynamic Party and has suffered onslaughts for so many years. British might with all its ruthlessness, cruelty and diplomacy has failed to crush it. Under the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the Congress became a mass organisation in 1920, and has been waging many a battle with the British Government resulting in moral victories. But with high political discontent and a dynamic leadership, the Congress failed to cause a successful revolution.

(*c*) The third essential for a successful revolution is that the Army and the Police must be with the masses, that is with the political Party aspiring for a successful revolution. In Russia and in France several attempts at revolutions were abortive without the co-operation, sympathy and the help of the Police and the Army. The October Revolution of Russia was a failure not because it was ill-conceived but because the forces of the State were not with the revolutionaries, and instead, helped to crush them. In India the British imperialists always banked on their British and Indian troops—the army of occupation. The whole policy of recruitment of the Indian army was based on the idea of keeping the Indian forces as mercenaries with no political outlook and no touch with the political trend of the country. Under the circumstances, British imperialists and Indian bureaucrats felt safe and snug against any possibility of an armed revolu-

tion. A battalion equipped with modern weapons could crush any resistance by civilians. Mobile columns could concentrate at short notice at a particular place, if need be, as long as the means of communications—the wireless, the telegraph, the telephone and the radio were intact. The enemies of India's freedom ever believed that India could never be free as long as they followed the mailed-fist policy backed up by so-called benevolent reforms. Mahatma Gandhi's technique of non-violence no doubt baffled British imperialists, because for centuries they have been used to put down armed resistance, and the new technique of non-violence came like a nightmare to them. But still the army was the bulwark against any mass movement by the Congress.

Conditions in India

(*d*) But the case of India is quite different from that of France or Russia. The French and the Russian had to overthrow their own Governments. They had no foreign governments in their own country. But in India the British Government had so planned the administration that even if the Indian forces were to join a popular movement, the British forces, stationed in India and brought from abroad, would be able to crush in no time even an armed resistance, as all the key positions in the army were held by British officers. Big arsenals and modern means of equipment were to be available from England, and the sea-lanes of the British Empire were secure for them and bubbling with life. In modern warfare it is not rifles alone that count, but the most modern deadly weapons, such as tanks, mechanised units, air-borne troops, highly specialized air-squadrons, radars and atom-bombs. Indians could not fall back upon their own resources which in modern warfare were sure to be blasted out in no time. No nation can stand modern attacks by sea and air with out-of-date weapons. The only psychological time for a country like India was to take advantage of a major war in which the enemies of her freedom were involved in a mortal combat. Such occasions do not come often. A rare opportunity does come once or twice in the life-history of a nation to shake off the shackles of its slavery. In the last World War I England was involved in a major war. India then had a chance to strike, but she had neither the mass organisation with a revolutionary fervour, nor was there any serious and successful attempt to win over the army. Attempts at armed revolution were from the top and were only lop-sided. There was no co-ordination between those who tried for an armed revolt and those for whom the armed revolt was intended. For instance, a ship laden with

firearms from North America remained lying for a considerable time on the Coromandal coast without its contents being unloaded! It had to sail back leaving behind a handful of Indian idealist revolutionaries who were very easily shot down or captured with the help of the local Police, their own countrymen. They could not even find a shelter.

LENIN'S STANDARDS OF SUCCESS

Lenin wrote in the very first of his *Iskara* articles:—"Men must be trained up who will devote to the Revolution not only their free evenings, but their whole lives; an organization must be developed of such dimensions that within it there can be carried out a precise division of labour for the various kinds of work that we want. I must tell you that it is much more difficult to catch ten able men than a hundred idiots. I shall uphold this principle, however much you may rouse the masses against any 'anti-democratic' attitude. By 'able men', as I have repeatedly emphasised, are to be understood, in connection with problems of organisation only professional revolutionaries whether students or workers by origin ......the leadership of the movement must be in the hands of the smallest possible number of groups, as uniform as possible, of well-experienced revolutionaries. The rank and file of the movement must be the largest possible number of groups, as various in every way as possible, from the different sections of the proletariat and of other classes."

GANDHI'S MOVEMENTS

Against the background of the political situation in India during World War I, there was not a ghost of a chance for a successful armed revolution. The post-war period has seen a miraculous change in India. Mahatma Gandhi took up the challenge against the mighty power of the British Government. From a debating society the Congress became a revolutionary body. The forces of a revolutionary spirit gathered momentum. The 1921 struggle was something unique in the history of the world. Unarmed and defenceless people were roused to mass consciousness. India woke up out of political torpor. The moral defeat of 1857 was converted into a first-class moral victory. Indians could walk with their heads up. Mahatmaji had the rare good fortune of attracting the ablest brains of the country. The two brilliant strategists and intellectuals, the late Deshabandhu Das and Pundit Motilal Nehru rallied round him together with their followers. A leader like Mahatma Gandhi with lieutenant like C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru could work miracles.

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

With the late C. R. Das came a full-blooded youngster pulsating with revolutionary spirit who had dedicated his whole being to the cause of India. This youngman—Subhas Chandra Bose—with a saintly character, had drunk deep at the fountain of Western philosophy. He combined in himself the spiritual power of India and the revolutionary spirit of the Western world. As a soldier he marched along with the mass movement of Gandhiji but his political soul could not be satisfied with the non-violent technique. It was a grim struggle he had to carry on within himself, but as he advanced in years he fully realized that British rule could not be thrown out without an armed revolution. When he was elected President of the Haripura Congress this duality in him came to the fore-front. The rumblings of the war clouds in Europe were distinct, and it was certain to him and to everybody else that World War II was in sight. To Subhas Babu India seemed to be crying out for deliverance. But what could he do? He could only plan inwardly, and felt frustrated that these could not be executed. The members of the Congress Working Committee were amazed at his lack of interest in the proceedings of the Working Committee. A volcano was then raging in his heart which remained undetected by his Congressite friends. He clearly saw that if War came—and it was bound to come—India would have had a rare opportunity to liquidate British rule in India. The discontent was there, the dynamic political organisation—the Congress—was there, and England was to be involved in a mortal combat, and if the army could join and foreign help could come, the tentacles of the octopus of the British Empire will not only be lopped off, but the octopus itself would be knocked out. There was a rare opportunity which may not come again in a thousand years, and only a fool will sit quiet. Certainly, Subhas Chandra Bose, a born revolutionary, was not going to miss this golden opportunity.

HIS METHOD OF FIGHT

It will be a digression to compare him with Mahatma Gandhi or any other revolutionary leader of foreign countries, as comparisons are sometimes odious and often impossible. A modern bomber cannot be compared with Arjun, Bhim or Hercules. Subhas Babu had his own technique for the liberation of the country which he had imbibed from his study of Western politics.

He took a retrospective view of world history. His heart throbbed with the idea of doing something which might cut the bonds of slavery. He

did not consider it to be a sin much less a political blunder to take foreign help against England—the arch enemy of India's freedom. According to his ideology, the greatest sin was the subjugation of India by any foreign Power. He would rather shed every drop of his blood than wait in inaction. He would take help even from the devil for the liberation of his motherland, provided that the devil was not to impose his diabolical rule upon her. He would take, according to his conception of political thought, help from Germany and Japan if that would lead to the success of the mission of his life. The war of American Independence would never have been won, had the Americans not got aid from France. The Russian Revolution might have been still-born without foreign help. It was Germany that made possible the historic journey of Lenin to Russia. During World War II, England and Russia joined together against the Axis Powers despite their ideological differences. Subhas Babu never cared for the chaff but he willingly picked up the solid grain. And he staked everything to get help from the enemies of England. It was immaterial for him whether he sought help from the Axis Powers. Surely, the anti-Axis Powers could not brook the idea of any help being given to him in his sacred duty of liberating his country. Like the Ganges that flows through deep gorges, flat plains and zigzag bends but at the same time keeps the current flowing, so he followed his ideology in different times in various forms but kept the current of liberty flowing without any stagnation of his political objectives. His hand was forced by the situation, not the doctrine. Theory is only a map for a mountaineer. Life is constantly disclosing fresh peaks, fresh inviting paths, fresh glaciers threatening destruction. No chart with plotted routes can remove the need for attentive observation. Therefore, he decided that instead of dabbling in academic discussions and out-of-date theories he would go straight for action. He never cared whether anybody liked him or not for his transparent honesty and sincerity of purpose where the stake was the freedom of his motherland from foreign yoke. He did not want that his morality of politics, based on human rights and international law, should be foisted on those who differed from him. The stand he took and the miracle that he performed came from the call of his inner voice. Had he not taken the risk of going out of India, he would not have been true to the tenets of his own life.

His Alliance with Axis Powers

There are friends both in India and abroad who consider that he committed a blunder by his alliance with the Axis Powers. A highly distinguished

English journalist who commands international reputation and is quoted by Lenin as an authority and who happens to be a great and close friend of the writer of this article expressed his opinion that Subhas Chandra Bose was not a strategist. A man in his position ought to have realized that the Axis Powers were not going to win, and as such he should not have taken their help. It may be admitted that this great Englishman has fought throughout his whole life against the imperialism of his own countrymen. But he cannot feel the pinch of foreign rule. The question before Netaji was not the success or failure of the Axis Powers. He had to deal as hard a blow as he could at the enemy at the psychological moment. Dry theories of Fascism and Democracy are ridiculous. India knows what British Democracy has done in sapping her life-blood. He clearly realized like a political seer, and subsequent events have also demonstrated that England's victory after World War II would be a pyrrhic one. Had he not taken advantage of this war he would have passed his days in India's prisons and the I.N.A. movement would not have been possible. The I.N.A. achievement alone that has taken the earth from under the feet of British imperialists is enough to immortalize him as a great Indian revolutionary. It may be said that the essential factors of a successful revolution, analyzed above, do not hold good in modern times. A re-orientation of world history is necessary, but history is made after the event has taken place. Did England believe that she could survive without American help ? Surely, Subhas Babu was the last man to align himself with England.

He took Advantage of Britain's Difficulty

India is, therefore, proud of her great son who fought against heavy odds. To his credit would it be debited that morally and militarily he forced the British people to quit India. He struck at the right moment when he could convert all the essentials of a successful revolution and take advantage of the steam-roller that broke to pieces the magic of the invulnerability of British might. His position is, therefore, unique in the annals of modern Indian history. He was a class by himself in the conception and execution of his ideals to which he clung so tenaciously.

All glory to him and to the martyrs who followed him !

NETAJI AND PUBLICITY

By RAMSINGH RAWAL

(Secretary, Dept. of Publicity, Press and Propaganda, Indian Independence League, Thailand)

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose always gave vital importance to two main departments in any organisation or a Government. They were those of (1) War, and (2) Publicity. I intend to throw some light over the latter, and how Netaji handled it.

Eversince Subhas entered the political arena, he always realised that an Indian Nationalist Propaganda Service or a machinery for the foreign countries was most imperative, with a view to achieve a dual objective: (1) to acquaint the people of the world with India's fight for freedom, and (2) to counter-act the malicious and mis-representing propaganda, carried on by the British imperialists and their agents. It was his view, that had attracted the late Vithalbhai Patel, who before his demise in Switzerland, entrusted a sum of one lakh of rupees to Subhas so as to enable him to organise a Nationalist propaganda machinery in foreign countries.

After his escape from India, when Netaji was in Europe, he at once started organising a band of young Indians, who were assigned by him the task of propagating among the peoples of Europe the cause of India, and removing the misconception and wrong impressions created in the minds of the European peoples by anti-Indian propaganda.

These Indian youths carried the message of Subhas to every nook and corner of Europe and North Africa, which were at that time under the sway of the German armies. His appeals were conveyed to the British Indian armies in North Africa, and they had a very favourable effect.

Soon after the outbreak of war in East Asia, Subhas started his broadcasts over German radios. He attached great importance to Radio propaganda, Press statements and Speeches. He organised in Europe three important radio stations, working under the Azad Hind organisation in Europe. They were Azad Hind Radio, National Congress Radio, and Azad Muslim Radio. He directed the policy of all the three Radio Stations himself, and all the three channels were used to impress upon the people of

India and the world at large as to what India was fighting for and what line of action Indians were to adopt in order to achieve the complete freedom of India.

After Netaji's arrival in East Asia, he reorganised the whole Indian Independence League and with that was automatically reorganised the Department of P.P.P. (Publicity, Press and Propaganda). He addressed the workers of the I.I.L., many a time, and stressed upon the fact that publicity and propaganda were among the most important factors which helped in winning a war, and as far as Indians were concerned, in achieving the goal of complete independence. He also stated that he would place all possible facilities at the disposal of the Department of P.P.P., so as to enable it to work most efficiently. A clear conception of the ideal, a quick and proper perception, and a clear vision of the whole struggle were the necessary factors, which, he said, every worker of the department should have with him. It was also most imperative, added Netaji for all the centres of the Department throughout East Asia to follow a joint and co-ordinated line of policy.

At another meeting at the Konkan Club in Singapore, which was attended by the Japanese official Press representatives as well, Netaji stated how the Germans carried on their propaganda. He disclosed that they had installed some Radio Stations, under such names as "Lenin Radio", "Karl Marx Radio", and so on. He also opined that straightforwardness and blunt expression with a certain amount of tact were necessary to be adopted while carrying on the propaganda.

As a result of Netaji's reorganisation, several dailies under the one name of *Azad Hind,* and weeklies were started in most of the centres of East Asia, like Singapore, Bangkok, Rangoon, etc., for local consumption. They interpreted the policy of the Azad Hind movement to the people in the "home front", and lead them on to battle and to victory.

All the I.I.L. radio stations in East Asia were similarly re-orientalised and all were re-named as Azad Hind Radios; the Radio Station at Singapore, however, had a distinguishing name: "Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind Radio Station". Later on, the same name was given to the Rangoon Azad Hind Radio Station. Besides, many other Radio Stations were also organised under instructions from Netaji. They were, "Indian National Army Radio", and "Awaz-e-Islam Radio". Through the medium of all the Radio stations, not only the policy of the Azad Hind Movement was being interpreted and the activities of the movement being broadcast, but also the people at home were exhorted to rise

in unison to uproot the British Raj. The world was thus being kept informed of the grand organisation and its activities which Indians in East Asia had built up under the dynamic leadership of Netaji.

Another aspect of Netaji's interest in the P.P.P. was his speeches. A fine and impressive orator as he is, his speeches simply infused new life and spirit into Indians in East Asia. He made men out of clay. He not only awakened the slumbering and poverty-stricken and backward watchmen, labourers, policemen, petty shop-keepers—they were the Indians who formed the bulk of the community in East Asia,—but also made them brave warriors. With his speeches, he led the soldiers of the I.N.A.—consisting of the former British Indian Army personnel and the civilian residents of East Asia—to the fields of battle.

There is another factor which deserves reference. It was Netaji's independent line of action. During the war, propaganda counts a lot, and has a great bearing over the progress of the war. Hence, no nation allows any propaganda conducted in its own or occupied territory which does not agree with her own policy. But the policy of the Azad Hind Movement and its Dept. of P.P.P. was quite independent of any outside interference. Of course, the Japanese policy was always kept in view, so as to work in co-operation with the allies. However, what dominated us was not the Japanese policy but the Azad Hind policy directed by Netaji.

In this connection I would refer to a particular case. In Bangkok, besides being the Secretary to the Department of P.P.P. of the I.I.L., I was also editing the daily "Azad Hind." One day during early March, 1945, some Japanese officers of the Hikar Kikan (Japanese Liaison Body) visited my office and told me that they were instructed to impose censorship upon our daily and especially its editorials. They argued that due to some technical reasons related to the war measures, it had become necessary, according to their (Japanese) point of view, to take that step. I refused to submit to their demands on the grounds that our policy was being conducted not by the Japanese but by our own Government and its Ministry of Publicity and Propaganda. I, therefore, refused to be dictated to by the Hikari Kikan, and in a protest threatened to completely stop the paper. At the same time I at once sent to the Headquarters of our Government a brief report of all that had developed.

Coincidently, His Excellency Netaji arrived there the next day. I immediately reported to him and acquainted him with the situation. He at once sent orders to the local Hikari Kikan Office not to interfere with the I. I. L. policy. Afterwards the Japanese officers never mentioned even the

word censorship. That was, to my knowledge, the first and last outside interference in our publicity policy.

Later, in May 1945, after the "Rangoon Retreat", when Netaji was in Bangkok, he asked me to convey to him what Indians in Thailand felt about the war, the Movement, the future struggle and so on. In the form of a questionaire, I ventilated to him the feelings of the community. When a mass meeting of the community was held on the 21st of May, 1945, Netaji in a two and a half hours' speech dealt with all the problems that were confronting and were to confront the Indian community in Thailand. His fine oration, his strong belief in India's glorious future, his confidence in complete victory and his heart-to-heart talk, created that impression that Indians would always be behind their Leader under all circumstances. That was another aspect of Netaji's way of handling publicity.

On the 27th of May, 1945, Netaji addressed a meeting of the workers of the Department of P.P.P., and asked for questions. In his replies he clearly told them that whether Japan won or lost, India's fight for freedom would continue till the goal of complete independence was finally achieved.

In short, Netaji attached great importance to the work of Publicity based on straightforwardness, blunt and to-the-point expression with a certain amount of tact, and wide range; he always considered it a vital factor in winning the freedom of the country. For, said he, it not only carried the masses with the freedom movement, but also helped to rally world opinion in favour of such a movement.

Jai Hind

A TRIBUTE

By ACHARYA NARENDRA DEVA

Shri Subhas Chandra Bose is one of the great figures of modern India. He came into prominence at an early age and after sacrificing a career threw himself heart and soul into the national movement. He regarded C. R. Das as his political *guru* and alike his great master sacrificed his all for the sake of the nation. He displayed wonderful organising talent and qualities of leadership throughout his chequered career. The one great idea which took possession of him completely was the achievement of his country's freedom. He fought for his noble cause with his whole heart and again and again underwent grave personal risks for the commemoration of this idea. Any status for his country less than that of complete independence did not satisfy him, and it was for this reason that he with others founded the Independence of India League in 1928. The object of the League was soon achieved and the Congress adopted complete independence as its objective at the Lahore session the next year.

Subhas Babu had a magnetic personality and was a born leader of men. By sheer dint of merit and service he became the undisputed leader of Bengal after a struggle and at one time Poet Rabindranath thought of holding a public ceremony for formally installing him in the *gadi*. He led a tempestuous life and saw many ups and downs but he never faltered from the path of duty as he conceived it. His capacity for organisation founded the greatest scope during the last war and he shone the brightest far away from the Indian scene specially in movements of danger. His wonderful work in organising the I.N.A. is a worthy episode in India's history and will always be cherished. With a heterogeneous mass of soldiers and officers drawn from all communities with practically no political education or experience behind them, he transformed them into a glorious army of national deliverance. Perhaps, the alien government's policy to keep the army free from political influences was helpful to him in achieving this miracle. But when all is said his genius for organisation must be recognised. It is marvellous that he could hold these men together till the very end, and that he could succeed in giving them a new vision and showing them a new way of life. The noble part that he played during the last war for the liberation of his country was the crowning act of his glory and his name will always be remembered with feelings of deep affection and reverence by his countrymen.

HE CAME, HE FOUGHT, HE CONQUERED

By JOHN A. THIVY

Before we had the great good fortune to be associated with Netaji in the Indian Independence Movement—that magnificent effort of Overseas Indians in the Cause of Freedom, Netaji had been already a national hero, whose picture adorned the walls of most of our houses, associations, clubs, business houses and even restaurants.

We understood that he was a brilliant student, who having passed the coveted I.C.S. Examination, ignored the security that it had promised, and instead, plunged into the national movement, which was just then gathering momentum on a unique plan of action—Civil Disobedience.

And so we followed his meteoric rise in the political arena of India, with its demand in sufferings and sacrifices, until the Tripuri Session of the Congress. That he practised what he preached was clearly proved in those stormy days of 1939 when he was almost alone and unbefriended. In a speech ten years earlier, that is in 1929, he had said, "One who desires to swim with the tide of popular approbation on all occasions may become the hero of the hour, but he cannot live in history. Rather, he should be prepared for any amount of misunderstanding and for any degree of persecution. For the most unselfish actions we should be prepared to get abuse and vilification from our closest friends, we should be prepared for unwarranted hostility. We should summon courage to stand out, alone and unfriended in the presence of the Cross as it were and fight the rest of the world."

Accordingly, rather than sacrifice his principles and his convictions, he left India to seek abroad the inspiration and the materials that he needed for the attainment of his life's mission.

But the manner of his disappearance and the complete silence that followed it were matters of great concern to Indians in Malaya, as he had, by that time, became an idol to all who would have liked to see a definite acceleration in the march of freedom.

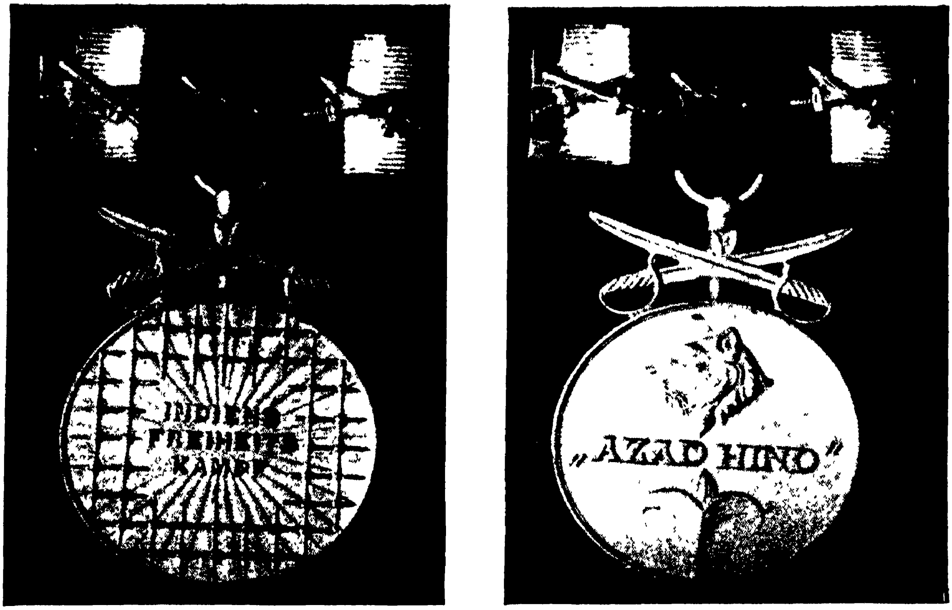
While Indians in Malaya, before the war, were deeply interested in the Indian struggle, and followed every step in it with deep concern, yet we were essentially individualistic and lacking in that urge to club together either for some positive attitude towards India or even towards Malaya.



Netaji's first speech in Singapore July, 1943 G Bhonsley sitting beside him



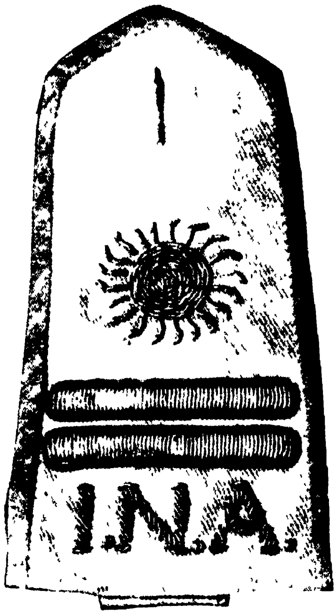
I N A 'Saheed' memorial, Singapore



Army medals and decorations for bravery



Maj.-General
Decoration



Lieut.-Colonel
Decorations

But, with the advent of the Greater-East Asia War matters changed considerably. The fact that an Asian country was successfully defeating the Western Powers was a thing that gladdened the hearts of Asians. It had till then been taken for granted that the Western Powers were more or less permanently entrenched in these areas, and that it would be an idle dream to hope for an Eastern nation to take up the cudgels against them and hope to last even the first round.

Therefore, the first reactions in these areas towards Japan's successes were those of pride of race, awakened consciousness and a desire to act with strength and determination for the attainment of freedom and equality. However, some leadership was needed. As far as Indians were concerned, this was obtained in the Indian Independence League formally inaugurated in Bangkok in March, 1942.

It was during those memorable days of the Conference of East Asian Indians that we were thrilled to hear the voice of Subhas Babu over the Radio. sending his message from Germany, to this historic Conference. He gave the assurance that he would come from the West to the East and help us in the task we had just decided upon to perform for Indian Independence. In giving this assurance he said that as the British Power could not prevent him from leaving India, so also no power would be able to prevent him from coming to us and leading us on to victory.

There had been no news of Netaji before that. There had already been rumours that he was dead. So, when he spoke over the Radio there were not a few who thought that it was all a hoax. In a word, the impression created was that it was all too good to be true.

However, the general level in the heightened feelings of hope and confidence would not permit doubts of Netaji's arrival to persist. On the other hand, the news spread like wild-fire to the far corners of East Asia, and among the masses and his expected appearance in Asia was waited with impatience.

Within a month or two of this Conference, the general impatience of the people was so great that in some of the Indian Independence League offices, it took the form of abuse against the top-ranking officials for their incompetence in devising ways and means to bring Netaji from Germany. But as months passed, the old doubts in the authenticity of Netaji's Radio message returned and caused despondency, even to the point of frustration among some of the workers.

For about a year from the date of the Bangkok Conference Srijut Rash Behari Bose worked hard to make the working system of the Indian Indepen-

dence League perfect as also of the organisation of the I.N.A. By May, 1943, he was showing signs of strain caused by the work, and he left for Japan on a 'mysterious' errand. The mystery was suddenly cleared when once again, this time from Tokyo, the voice of Netaji was heard over the Radio. In Malaya, the talk was relayed to all the towns and villages to enable people, congregated in public places, to hear his message.

The outstanding point of Netaji's speech was that when the British with all their cleverness and cunning could not deceive him, he was confident that no other Power on earth could deceive him. These words were uttered from Tokyo, the capital of Japan, a country that was suspected of ambitious imperialism, and one that would brook no interference from any country or man that opposed her aims. Therefore, this clear-cut statement by Netaji was at once a reassurance to Indians and India and a warning to Japan. It was firm, dignified and unambiguous. Thus even before he was acclaimed leader of the movement, he had won the confidence and admiration of all Overseas Indians. When leaders of other nations in East Asia were indulging in platitudes, here was Netaji calmly challenging in dignity and soberly defiant in purpose.

Accompanied by Srijut Rash Behari Bose, Netaji landed in Singapore on the 2nd of July, 1943. He was received at the Air Port by representatives of the I.N.A. and of the Indian Independence League from all over East Asia. He came, he saw, he conquered. When I say this, I am not trying to be flamboyant. I am merely stating a fact. It just happened that way. He met us with a calm assurance. Our confidence in him was its reciprocation. Thus he became our Netaji. It was a natural and spontaneous consequence of the hour and of the man.

Netaji showed his energy as well as his organising ability by the vigorous measures he took in stepping up the efficiency of the League and the Army. The League was departmentalised in the Headquarters. The same system was adopted in the Territorial State and local branches of the League. Full-time workers were placed in charge of the various Departments, such as Recruitment and Training, Supplies, Finance, *Azad Hind Dal*, Security, Health and Social Welfare, Overseas womens, Establishing, etc. Thus the League began to function just like any Government. With its various departments co-ordinating and co-operating in the task of the movement, namely, to furnish the I.N.A. with men, money and materials for the prosecution of the war, the Indian Independence League got into gear under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose.

As soon as Netaji took command of the I.N.A. he reorganised

and revitalised it with the creation of the Chief-of-Staff and Divisional Commands, and the consequent Army Department, the I.N.A. took the form and effectiveness of any modern regular army. Netaji made it clear that the I.N.A. had a two-fold task to perform. He said: "With the force of arms and at the cost of your blood you will have to win liberty. Then when India is free, you will have to organise the permanent army of Free India whose task it will be to preserve our liberty for all time. We must build up our national defence on such an unshakable foundation that never again in our history shall we lose our freedom."

The assurances that Netaji received from delegates and representatives from the far-flung territorial branches of the Independence League were that Indians were willing and anxious to make all necessary sacrifices for the cause and were desirous and capable of shouldering the consequent responsibilities. In these circumstances Netaji could have inaugurated the Provisional Government right away. But that was not his way. Although he did not doubt these assurances and the obvious enthusiasm of the masses, he decided upon a personal inspection of all the territories and thus assess the situation for himself.

He returned quite satisfied that the Overseas Indians meant business. In the meantime training camps had been set up in several centres in Malaya, Burma and Siam very soon, they were full up. Those thousands that could not secure admittance into training camps, because of want of accommodation. received part-time training in their respective localities, and awaited their turn.

So by October 21, 1943, the Independence Movement in East Asia had an army, training camps, and no end of recruits. It had a system and machinery in the League and it had a leader who was its fountain-head of energy. All that remained to be accomplished was the inauguration of a Government. Without a Government our activities could not receive international recognition. Without a Government, we would not be able to declare the war of Indian Independence and we could not lead the army to battle.

And thus the great day dawned—October 21, 1943. It was a day of high feelings, deep emotions, and withal, firm determination. "In the name of God, in the name of by-gone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice, we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and to strike for India's freedom." Thus did Subhas Chandra Bose, Head of the State, Prime Minister, Minister

of War and of Foreign Affairs, announce the reason and purpose of the Provisional Government of *Azad Hind.*

When the time came for Netaji to take his oath of allegiance to India, a great hush descended upon the Hall. It was a solemn moment. Netaji started with a firm voice. Then it began to quiver with emotion—it stopped. He breathed hard and tried again—a few more words, but the well of feeling and emotion overpowered him, suddenly he was sobbing, tears rolled down his cheeks. There was dead silence. No one could help him. All were helpless. There was hardly a dry eye in that vast assembly.

What thoughts passed his mind that could so completely overpower him? Did he see in his mind's eye mother India, her draperies torn and her hair dishevelled, the cruel chains of serfdom biting into her hunger-stricken flesh and bones ? Did he see the blood of the martyrs and the lamentations of their spirits ? Again, did he foresee his valiant Army of Liberation with undaunted mein, defying overwhelming odds and facing certain death just to keep the cause of India alive ?

The tension was terrific. Fortunately some one had a brain wave. He lustily called out "Netaji Ki Jai." The cry was taken up, to echo and re-echo in the lofty Hall of the Cathay Buildings, and was carried along in waves by the thousands of hilarious adherents who packed the roads and spaces outside. Thus the tension was broken and Netaji completed his solemn oath in a clear ringing voice.

Netaji throughout his political career showed that he was definitely against any form of intrigues, even against the British Government. He maintained that all methods of struggle for the furtherance of one's cause should be open and above board. So was the declaration of war against Britain and the United States of America, by the Provisional Government of *Azad Hind* on the night of October 23, 1943. The practice and requirements of International Law were fulfilled. There were the people owing allegiance to a Government. The Government was recognised by other Governments. There was a regular army recruited from the adherents of the Government. The Government had a perfectly legitimate cause to fight for. The Government made a declaration of war, and then and then only launched its attack. Thus it is clear Netaji, as Head of State, took great care to maintain the honour and dignity of the Government, of the cause and of India. As a matter of fact, every step that was taken, every contact that was made, every statement that was made, were such that they would never offend the best interests of India nor the self-respect of Indians. The Japanese who soon became by-word for ruthlessness and over-bearingness,

found that they could not ruffle the calm courage and self-reliance that characterised our well-co-ordinated activities in the League, Army and Government. The towering personality of Netaji found a harmonious cord even in the least of our workers, and thus did the whole remain strong, firm, and unshakable. Therefore, wherever the Indian Independence Movement had its following, nationals other than Indians were also saved from many unnecessary indignities, if only for the reason that the Japanese administrators did not want to show too obvious a difference in their treatment between Indians and others. Thus it will be seen that our strength and solidarity had a beneficial effect for other peoples also. It was also this factor that was the main reason for the good relationship that always existed between Indians and the other nationalities in the Japanese-occupied areas throughout the war period.

The Provisional Government took independent decisions on all matters. Naturally as allies of the Japanese there had to be understanding on questions that directly affected war planning and execution thereof. These were maintained by proper liaison officers. But on matters of internal administration, policies and even decisions on those who were friends and who were foes, the Provisional Government did not receive any outside directives, nor would it have tolerated any such directives if they had come.

Netaji would never take a decision by himself. He would be in constant consultation with the Cabinet and each and every decision would be arrived at in the usual formal manner. Take the instance of the Assembly of Greater East Asia Nations. We decided that the Provisional Government would attend that Conference only as an observer. We came to that conclusion because Netaji and the Cabinet reached the decision that the Provisional Government of *Azad Hind* should not and, therefore, would not commit India to any future political or economic policy. Our Government's job was to liberate India. Thereafter, it would be for the people of India to decide on the relationships India would maintain with other Asian countries.

Then again, before the Provisional Government, the I.N.A. and the Independence League Headquarters moved into Burma, Netaji as Head of State and Foreign Minister contacted the Burmese Government, and reached an understanding and agreement with it. By taking these steps, our Government demonstrated its independent authority and, at the same time, recognised the Burmese Government as the sole authority with which we had to deal in that regard.

Take another instance. The Japanese Government appointed a minister

plenipotentiary to the Provisional Government. The Minister in due course reached Rangoon, the Headquarters of the Provisional Government. However, his appointment papers which were sent by a special courier did not reach him due to misadventure. But Netaji refused to see or receive the Japanese Government's representative unless he produced his credentials and unless the formalities attendant on installation were observed.

In matters pertaining to declarations of war or the maintenance of neutrality, our Government acted independently. Under the guidance of Netaji, whose knowledge of international affairs and ability to gauge situations, and yet utilise them without sacrificing moral principles, our Government was able to decide who were our enemies and who were not. Although Japan was fighting bitterly against the Chungking Regime, our attitude was one of neutrality, and we maintained good relationship with the Chinese people. In the latter days of the East Asia War, Japan and Russia were at grips. But our Government decided not to declare war against Russia, because in so far as Indian Independence was concerned, Russia was not an enemy.

Indeed, Netaji was head and shoulders above any statesman, politician, or strategist that existed in Great East Asia, during the period of the War. Without his courage, integrity of character, profound knowledge and self-sacrificing spirit, the Indian Independence Movement would not have been able to withstand the innumerable pitfalls, attempts at sabotage by enemy agents, and withal, the bumptious ways of mum-skulled Japanese military administrative and security officials. There can be no doubt that those Japanese leaders who came in personal contact with Netaji must have received object-lessons on leadership. The lesser of Indian officials and workers in the Movement rose to the occasion and behaved with credit just because we were so closely associated with the very embodiment of service and sacrifice—Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Even today, nearly two years after the crash of our great venture, the resultant, victimisation has not been able to weaken, much less eradicate the spirit of unity, faith and sacrifice that are the hall-marks of those that had served the cause of freedom under Netaji.

It is said that Netaji is dead. This may be so. After all the only certain thing about life is death. But Netaji's attributes will continue to live in the minds and hearts of those that worked with him, and will continue to benefit this troubled world. That is the only feasible and useful manner in which we can pay our daily, silent tribute to Netaji.

WHAT ROMAIN ROLLAND THINKS*

By SUBHAS C. BOSE

Wednesday, the 3rd April, 1935. It was a bright sunny morning and Geneva was looking at its best. In the distance, silhouetted against the clear blue sky, stood the snow-capped heights of Saleve. In front of us there lay the picturesque lake of Geneva with the stately buildings mirrored in its glassy bosom. I was out on a pilgrimage. Ever since I had landed in Europe, two years ago, I had been longing to meet that great man and thinker—that great friend of India and of India's culture—M. Romain Rolland. Circumstances had prevented our meeting in 1933 and again in 1934, but the third attempt was going to succeed. I was in high spirits, but occasionally a thrill of anxiety and doubt passed within me. Would I be inspired by this man or would I return disappointed ? Would this great dreamer and idealist appreciate the hard facts of life—the practical difficulties that beset the path of the fighter in every age and clime ? Above all, would he read what fate had written on the walls of India's history ?

What heartened me, however, were the inspiring words in his letter of the 22nd February...."But we men of thought must each of us fight against the temptation that befalls us in moments of fatigue and unsettledness, of repairing to a word beyond the battle called either God or Art or Freedom of the Spirit or those distant regions of the mystic soul. For fight we must, as our duty lies on this side of the ocean—on the battle-ground of men."

For full two hours we drove along the circuitous route which skirts the lake of Geneva. It was charming weather and while we raced along the Swiss Riviera we enjoyed one of the finest sceneries in Switzerland. As we came to Villeneuve, the car slowed down and ultimately came to a standstill in front of Villa Olga, the residence of the French savant. That was indeed a beauty spot. Sheltered by an encircling row of hills, the house commanded a magnificent view of the lake. All around us there was peace, beauty and grandeur. It was indeed a fit place for a hermitage.

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* This article has been revised by M. Romain Rolland.

As I rang the bell, the door was opened by a lady of short stature but with an exceedingly sympathetic and lively face. This was Madame Romain Rolland. Hardly had she greeted me than another door opened in front of us and there emerged a tall figure with a pale countenance and with wonderful penetrating eyes. Yes, this was the face I had seen in many a picture before, a face that seemed to be burdened with the sorrows of humanity. There was something exquisitely sad in that pallid face—but it was not an expression of defeatism. For no sooner did he begin to speak than colour rushed to his white cheeks—the eyes glowed with a light that was uncommon—and the words that he poured forth were pregnant with life and hope.

The usual greetings and the preliminary enquiries about India and Indian friends were soon over and we dropped into a serious conversation. M. Rolland could not—or did not—speak English and I could not speak French. So we had as interpreters Mademoiselle Rolland and Madame Rolland. My purpose was to discuss with him the latest developments in the Indian situation and to ascertain his present views on the important problems before the world. I had, therefore, to do much of the talking at first in order to explain the Indian situation as I analysed and comprehend it. The two cardinal principles on which the movement of the last 14 years had been based, were—firstly, Satyagraha or non-violent resistance and secondly, a united front of all sections of the Indian people, *e.g.*, capital and labour and landlord and peasant. India's great hope was that the Satyagraha movement would fructify in a peaceful settlement in the following manner. Within India, the movement would gradually paralyse the civil administration of the country. Outside India, the lofty ethics of Satyagraha would stir the conscience of the British people. Thus would the conflict lead to a settlement whereby India would win her freedom without striking a blow and without shedding any blood. But that hope was frustrated. Within India, the Satyagraha movement no doubt created a non-violent revolution, but the higher services, both civil and military, remained unaffected and the "King's Government", therefore, went on much as usual. Outside India, a handful of high-minded Britishers were no doubt inspired by the ethics of Gandhi, but the British people as a whole remained quite indifferent; self-interest drowned the ethical appeal.

The failure to win freedom led to a very earnest heart-searching among the rank and file of the Indian National Congress. One section of Congressmen went back to the old policy of constitutional action within the Legislatures. Mahatma Gandhi and his orthodox followers, after the

suspension of the civil disobedience movement (or Satyagraha), turned to a programme of social and economic uplift of the villages. But the more radical section, in their disappointment, inclined to a new ideology and plan of action and the majority of them combined to form the Congress Socialist Party. * * *

"What would be M. Rolland's attitude", I asked at the end of my lengthy preface, "if the united front is broken up and a new movement is started not quite in keeping with the requirements of Gandhian Satyagraha"?

He would be very sorry and disappointed, said M. Rolland, if Gandhi's Satyagraha failed to win freedom for India. At the end of the Great War, when the whole world was sick of bloody strife and hatred, a new light had dawned on the horizon when Gandhiji emerged with his new weapon of political strife. Great were the hopes that Gandhi had roused throughout the whole world.

"We find from experience", said I, "that Gandhi's method is too lofty for this materialistic world and, as a political leader, he is too straightforward in his dealings with his opponents. We find, further, that though the British are not wanted in India, with the help of superior physical force, they have nevertheless been able to maintain their existence in India in spite of the inconvenience and annoyance caused by the Satyagraha movement. If Satyagraha ultimately fails, would M. Rolland like to see the national endeavour continued by other methods or would he cease taking interest in the Indian movement"?

"The struggle must go on in any case"—was the emphatic reply.

"But I know several European friends of India who have told me distinctly that their interest in the Indian freedom movement is due entirely to Gandhi's method of non-violent resistance."

M. Rolland did not agree with them at all. He would be sorry, if Satyagraha failed. But if it really did, then the hard facts of life would have to be faced and he would like to see the movement conducted on other lines.

That was the answer nearest to my heart. Here then was an idealist, who did not build castles in the air but who had his feet planted on *terra-firma.*

"There are people in Europe", I said, "who say that just as in Russia there were two successive revolutions—a bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution—so also in India there will be two successive revolutions—a national-democratic revolution and a social revolution. In

my opinion, however, the fight for political freedom will have to be conducted simultaneously with the fight for socio-economic emancipation. The party that will bring political freedom to India will be the party that will also put into effect the entire programme of socio-economic reconstruction. What is M. Rolland's opinion on the point"?

He found it difficult to express a definite opinion because he was not aware of all the facts of the Indian situation.

"What would be M. Rolland's attitude", I continued, "if the united front policy of the Indian National Congress fails to win freedom for India and a radical party emerges which identifies itself with the interests of the peasants and the workers"?

M. Rolland was clearly of opinion that the time had come for the Congress to take a definite stand on the economic issues. "I have already written to Gandhi", said he, "that he should make up his mind on this question."

Explaining his attitude in the event of a schism within the Indian National Congress, he continued, "I am not interested in choosing between two political parties or between two generations. What is of interest and of value to me is a higher question. To me, political parties do not count; what really counts is the great cause that transcends them—the cause of the workers of the world. To be more explicit, if as a result of unfortunate circumstances, Gandhi (or any party, for the matter of that) should be in conflict with the cause of the workers and with their necessary evolution towards a socialistic organization—if Gandhi (or any party) should turn away and stand aloof from the workers' cause, then for ever will I side with the oppressed workers—for ever will I participate in their efforts * * *, because on their side is justice and the law of the real and necessary development of human society."

I was delighted and amazed. Even in my most optimistic moods, I had never expected this great thinker to come out so openly and boldly in support of the workers' cause.

The strain resulting from our animated conversation was great and I felt anxious for the delicate health of my host. However, a relief came when tea was announced and we all moved into the adjoining room.

Over cups of tea our conversation went on uninterrupted. Many were the problems that we rushed through in our two and a half hours' discussion. M. Rolland was greatly interested in the Congress Socialist Party and its composition. His concern for the continued incarceration of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru and other politicals was profound. His interest

in all the actions, speeches and writings of the Mahatma was astonishing. For instance, he pulled out from his old files a statement of the Mahatma in which he had expressed his sympathy for socialism. We talked at length of Mahatma Gandhi and his tactics. I ventured the remark that the Mahatma would not take a definite stand on the economic issues. Whether on political or social or economic questions, he was temperamentally a believer in 'the golden mean.' I then referred to what the younger generation regarded as some of the defects in his leadership and tactics, namely, his incorrigible habit of putting all his cards on the table, his opposition to the policy of social boycott of political opponents, his hope of a change of heart on the part of the British Governments, etc. It did not afford us any satisfaction, I said, to oppose him or even criticize him—when he had done more for his country than any one else in recent history and had raised India considerably in the estimation of the whole world. But we loved our country more than any personality.

I asked M. Rolland if he would be good enough to put in a nutshell the main principles for which he had stood and fought all his life. "Those fundamental principles," he said, "are (1) Internationalism (including equal rights for all races without distinction), (2) Justice for the exploited workers—implying thereby that we should fight for a society in which there will be no exploiters and no exploited—but all will be workers for the entire community, (3) Freedom for all suppressed nationalities and (4) Equal rights for women as for men." And he proceeded to amplify some of these points.

As our conversation was drawing to a close, I remarked that the views he had expressed that afternoon would cause surprise in many quarters, since they appeared to be a recent development in his thought-life. This remark worked like an electric button and set in motion a whole train of thought. M. Rolland spoke of the acute mental agony he had passed through since the end of the War in trying to revise his social ideas and his entire ideology. "This combat within myself," he said, "extended over a very wide field and the problem of non-violence was only a part of it. I have not decided against non-violence, but I have decided that non-violence cannot be the central pivot of our entire social activity. It can be one of its means—one of its proposed forms, still subject to experiment." Continuing he said, "The primary objective of all our endeavours should be the establishment of another social order, more just and more human. * * * If we do not do so, it will mean the end of society." Then referring to the methods of activity, he said, "* * * My own task

has been for several years to try and unite the forces * * * against the old order that is enslaving and exploiting humanity. This has been my role in the World's Congress of all political parties against War and Fascism, which was held in Amsterdam in 1932 and in the permanent Committees appointed by that Congress. I still believe that there is in non-violence a strong though latent revolutionary power which can and ought to be used, * * * "

I interrupted him at this stage to ask him how the world at large could know of his present ideas. To this he replied, "My social creed of these fifteen years has been expounded in two volumes of articles which have been just published. In the first one "Quinze ans de Combat" (Fifteen Years of Combat), Editions Rieder, Boulevard St. Germain 108, Paris VI—I have spoken of my inner fight and the evolution of my social ideas. In the second book "Par la Revolution La Paix (By way of Revolution to Peace) Editions Sociales Internationales, 24, Rue Racini, Paris VI, I have dealt with questions concerning war, peace, non-violence, * * .* and the co-ordination of their efforts in fighting the old social order." Continuing he said that some of his friends had refused to recognize all that he had written, preferring to accept only those portions with which they agreed. These two volumes* would, however, be a faithful record of the evolution of his thought.

Our conversation did not end without a discussion of the much-apprehended and much-talked-of war in Europe. "For suppressed peoples and nationalities", I remarked, "war is not an unmixed evil." "But for Europe war will be the greatest disaster," said he; "It may even mean the end of civilization. And for Russia, peace is absolutely necessary if she is to complete her programme of social reconstruction."

Before I took leave of my host, I expressed my deep gratitude for his kindness and my great satisfaction at what he had conveyed to me. I valued so greatly his sympathy for India and her cause that it had filled me with anxiety and fear whenever I had tried to imagine what his reaction would be towards the latest developments in the Indian situation.

The sun was still shining on the blue waters of the lake of Geneva as I emerged out of Villa Olga. Around me there stood the snow-covered mountains. The air was pregnant with joy and it infected me. A heavy load had been lifted off my mind. I felt convinced that this great thinker and artist would stand for India and her freedom whatever might be her

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* I have just received a present of these two books from the author. What a pity I cannot read them in the original. I feel like learning French if only for the sake of reading these books.

immediate future or her future line of action. And with that conviction I returned to Geneva a happy man.

Karlsbad, 2-7-1935.

Editor's Note.—In order to comply with the requirements of the press laws in force in India, so far as it is possible for us to understand them, we have omitted certain portions of this article, indicated by the asterisks.

GIVE ME BLOOD ! PROMISE YOU FREEDOM ! ! *

Friends ! Twelve months ago a new programme of "Total Mobilisation" or "Maximum sacrifice" was placed before Indians in East Asia. To-day I shall give you an account of our achievements during the past year and shall place before you our demands for the coming year. But, before I do so, I want you to realise once again what a golden opportunity we have for winning freedom. The British are now engaged in a world-wide struggle and in the course of this struggle they have suffered defeat after defeat in so many fronts. The enemy having been thus considerably weakened, our fight for liberty has become very much easier than it was five years ago. Such a rare and God-given opportunity comes once in a century. That is why we have sworn to fully utilise this opportunity for liberating our Motherland from the British yoke.

I am so very hopeful and optimistic about the outcome of our struggle, because I do not rely merely on the efforts of three million Indians in East Asia. There is a gigantic movement going on inside India and millions of our countrymen are prepared for maximum suffering and sacrifice in order to achieve liberty.

Unfortunately, ever since the great fight of 1857, our countrymen are disarmed, whereas the enemy is armed to teeth. Without arms and without a modern army, it is impossible for a disarmed people to win freedom in this modern age. Through the grace of Providence and through the help of generous Nippon, it has become possible for Indians in East Asia to get arms to build up a modern army. Moreover, Indians in East Asia are united to a man in the endeavour to win freedom and all the religious and other differences that the British here tried to engineer inside India, do not simply exist in East Asia. Consequently, we have now an ideal combination of circumstances favouring the success of our struggle—and all that is wanted is that Indians should themselves come forward to pay the price of liberty.

According to the programme of "Total Mobilization," I demanded of you men, money and materials. Regarding men, I am glad to tell you that I have obtained sufficient recruits already. Recruits have come to us from every corner of East Asia—from China, Japan, Indo-China,

* A speech delivered by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at a huge mass rally of the Indians in Burma on the first day of Netaji Week, on Tuesday, July 4, 1944.



Give me Blood I promise you freedom

Philippines, Java, Borneo, Celebes, Sumatra, Malaya, Thailand and Burma.

The only complaint that I have is that considering the population of Indians in Burma, the number of recruits from Burma should have been larger. You will, therefore, have to exert yourselves still more in future in order to furnish more recruits from this part.

With regard to money, you remember that I demanded 30 millions from Indians in East Asia. I have actually got much more in the meantime and, from the arrangements that have been made, I am confident that a steady flow of money will be maintained in future.

From my experience of more than 20 years' work inside India, I can properly assess the worth and value of the work done here. I must, therefore, warmly thank you for the hearty co-operation that you have extended to me. At the same time, I must draw your attention to the work that still lies ahead of us.

You must continue the mobilization of men, money and materials with greater vigour and energy, in particular, the problem of supplies and transport has to be solved satisfactorily.

Secondly, we require more men and women of all categories for administration and reconstruction in liberated areas. We must be prepared for a situation in which the enemy will ruthlessly apply the scorched-earth policy, before withdrawing from a particular area and will also force the civilian population to evacuate as was attempted in Burma.

Last, but most important of all, is the problem of sending reinforcements in men and in supplies to the fighting fronts. If we do not do so, we cannot hope to maintain our success at the fronts. Nor can we hope to penetrate deeper into India.

Those of you who will continue to work on the Home Front should never forget that East Asia—and particularly Burma—form our base for the war of liberation. If this base is not strong, our fighting forces can never be victorious. Remember that this is a "Total War"—and not merely a war between two armies. That is why for full one year I have been laying so much stress on "Total Mobilization" in East.

There is another reason why I want you to look after the Home Front properly. During the coming months I and my colleagues on the War Committee of the Cabinet desire to devote our whole attention to the fighting front—and also to the task of working up the revolution inside India. Consequently, we want to be fully assured that the work at the base will go on smoothly and uninterruptedly even in our absence.

Friends, one year ago, when I made certain demands of you. I told

you that if you give me "Total Mobilization," I would give you a "Second Front." I have redeemed that pledge. The first phase of our campaign is over. Our victorious troops, fighting side by side with Nipponese troops, have pushed back the enemy and are now fighting bravely on the sacred soil of our dear Motherland.

Gird up your loins for the task that now lies ahead. I had asked you for men, money and materials. I have got them in a generous measure. Now I demand more of you. Men, money and materials cannot by themselves bring victory or freedom. We must have the motive-power that will inspire us to brave deeds and heroic exploits.

It will be a fatal mistake for you to wish to live and see India free—simply because victory is now within reach. No one here should have the desire to live to enjoy freedom. A long fight is still in front of us.

We should have but one desire today—the desire to die so that India may live—the desire to face a martyr's death, so that the path to freedom may be paved with the martyr's blood.

Friends! My comrades in the War of Liberation ! To-day I demand of you one thing, above all. I demand of you Blood. It is blood alone that can avenge the blood that the enemy has split. It is blood alone can that pay the price of freedom. Give me blood and I promise you freedom.

NO TRUCK WITH IMPERIALISM *

You have done me a very great honour by inviting me to preside over the deliberations of the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh to-day. At the same time, the responsibility you have thrown on my shoulders is onerous to a degree. This Conference is intended to focus all the anti-imperialist forces in the country that are now determined to resist a compromise with imperialism. To preside over such a Conference is by no means an easy task. This task becomes all the more serious and arduous when the Chairman of the Reception Committee is no less a person than Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. It is in response to Swamiji's clarion call that we have assembled here to-day.

I shall fail in my duty if before proceeding to discuss the problem of the day, I do not pay a tribute to those who are responsible for organising this Conference. I happen to know something of the obstacles and the difficulties that had to be overcome before this Conference could meet and I can therefore speak with a certain amount of authority. These obstacles and difficulties were of a twofold character. In the first place, there were physical and material obstacles and difficulties to be overcome at Ramgarh before adequate arrangement for the Conference could be made. In the second place, persistent hostile propaganda all over the country had to be faced by the Conference. The most surprising and painful part of this propaganda was the determined endeavour of a section of Leftists (or shall I say pseudo-Leftists ?) to make this Conference impossible by openly condemning it and also by trying to sabotage it. As a matter of fact, during the last few months it has become more and more evident that a number of Leftists have begun to play the role of apologists of the Rightists but such a phenomenon is not new in history. Man lives to learn and the longer he lives, the more does he realise the aptness of the oft-repeated truism that history repeats itself.

It has been argued by the apologists of the Congress Working Committee that the Congress is itself the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference and that such a Conference is therefore unnecessary. The resolution of the last meeting of the Congress Working Committee which met at Patna is held up before our eyes in order to demonstrate that Congress has adopted

* Full text of the Presidential Address delivered at the Anti-Compromise Conference held at Ramgarh on March 19, 1940.

an uncompromising policy. One cannot but admire the naivete of such an argument, but is it meet and proper for politicians and political workers to be so very naive ?

One has only to go through the whole of the Patna resolution and particularly through the latter portion of it in order to realise that there are loopholes which detract from the intrinsic value of that resolution. No sooner was this resolution passed than Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the statement that the door had not been banged on future negotiations for a settlement. Mahatmaji's subsequent lengthy remarks on Civil Disobedience do not assure us by any means that the period of struggle has commenced. In fact, what has distressed and bewildered us during the last year and a half is the fact that while on the one hand red-hot resolutions are passed and statements issued by members of the Congress Working Committee, simultaneously other remarks are made and statements issued either by Mahatma Gandhi or by other Rightist leaders which create a totally different impression on the average mind. Then there is the moot question as to whether the Patna resolution would have been passed at all, but for the pressure exerted by the Left during the last six months.

The country eagerly awaits a clear and unequivocal declaration from the Congress Working Committee that the door has finally been banged on all talks of a compromise with Imperialism. But will this declaration be forthcoming? If so, when ?

Those who aver that the Congress is the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference perhaps suffer from shortness of memory and their brains consequently need refreshing. Have they forgotten that as soon as the war began Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to Simla without caring to consult the Congress Working Committee and informed His Excellency the Viceroy that he was in favour of rendering unconditional help to Great Britain in the prosecution of the War ? Do they not realise that Mahatma Gandhi being the sole Dictator of the Congress, his personal views necessarily have a far-reaching implication ? Have they forgotten that since the outbreak of war the Congress Working Committee has side-tracked the main issue—namely, our demand for *Purna Swaraj*—by putting forward a demand for a fake Constituent Assembly ? Have they forgotten that some prominent Rightist leaders, including members of the Congress Working Committee, have been continuously whittling down the implication of a Constituent Assembly and that they have gone so far as to accept separate electorate and the existing franchise for the Legislative Assembly as the basis for electing the Constituent Assembly of their dreams ? Have they forgotten

that after the resignation of Congress Ministries, several Congress Ministers have been showing an inordinate desire to get back to office ? Have they forgotten the consistent attitude which Mahatma Gandhi has adopted during the last six months in the matter of a compromise with the British Government? And do they not know that behind the smoke-screen of hot phrases, negotiations for a compromise have been going on apace ?

Unfortunately for us, the British Government have ceased to take the Congress seriously and have formed the impression that, however much Congressmen may talk, they will not ultimately show fight. Since September, 1939 there has not been any dearth of resolutions or statements. Some members of the Congress Working Committee opine that these resolutions have impressed the world. But whether they have impressed the world or not they have certainly not impressed the British, who are essentially a realistic race. During the last six months we have offered them only words and we have received the time-worn reply that so long as the Hindu-Muslim problem remains unsolved, *Purna Swaraj* is unthinkable.

Since September last, India has been passing through a rare crisis when men's minds have fallen a prey to doubt and vacillation. The first to fall were the leaders themselves and the demoralisation that seized them has been spreading as a contagion throughout the land. A determined and wide-spread effort is needed if we are to stem the rot. To make this effort really effective our activities should be focussed at an All-India Conference of all those who are determined to have no truck with Imperialism.

The crisis that has overtaken us may be rare in Indian history, but it is nothing new in the history of the world. Such crises generally appear in periods of transition. In India, we are now ringing down the curtain on an age that is passing away, while we are at the same time ushering in the dawn of a new era. The age of imperialism is drawing to a close and the era of freedom, democracy and socialism looms ahead of us. India, therefore, stands to-day at one of the cross-roads of history. It is for us to share, if we so will, the heritage that awaits the world.

It is not to be wondered at that men's minds should be bewildered when the old structure is crushing under its own weight and the new has yet to rise out of the ashes of the old. But let us not lose faith in ourselves, or in our countrymen or in humanity in this hour of uncertainty. To lose faith would be a calamity of the first magnitude. Such crises constitute the supreme test of a nation's leadership. The present crisis has put our own leadership to the test and the latter has been unfortunately found wanting. It is only by analysing and exposing the causes of its failure

that we can learn the lesson of history and lay the foundation of our future effort and achievement. But such analysis and exposure will necessarily be painful to all concerned, though there is means of avoiding it.

I may digress at this stage and draw an analogy with similar crises in other climes and ages. When the October Revolution broke out in Russia in 1917, nobody had a clear conception as to how the revolution should be directed. Most of the Bolsheviks were then thinking in terms of a coalition with other parties. It was left to Lenin to denounce all coalitions and give out the slogan—'All Power to the Soviet.' Who knows what turn Russian history have taken but for this timely lead of Lenin's, during a period of doubt and vacillation ? Lenin's unerring instinct (or intuition), which ultimately proved to be prophetic, saved Russia from disaster and from a tragedy similar to that which overtook Spain the other day.

Let us now take a contrary case. Italy in 1922 was, to all intents and purposes, ripe for Socialism. All that she needed was an Italian Lenin. But the man of the hour did not arrive and the opportunity slipped out of socialist hands. It was immediately seized by the Fascist leader, Benito Mussolini.

By his march to Rome and his seizure of power, Italian history took an altogether different turn and Italy ultimately went Fascist instead of going socialist. Doubt and vacillation had seized the Italian leaders and so they failed. Mussolini had one supreme virtue which not only saved him but brought him the laurels of victory. He knew his mind and he was not afraid to act. This constituted the essence of leadership.

To-day our leaders are wobbling and vacillation has demoralised a section of leftists as well. "Unity," "National Front," "Discipline"—these have become cheap slogans which have no relation to reality. Befogged by such attractive slogans, they seem to have forgotten that the supreme need of the hour is a bold, uncompromising policy leading us on to a national struggle. Whatever strengthens us for this purpose is to be welcomed. Whatever weakens us is to be eschewed. Unity which ties us to the apron-strings of rightist politicians is by no means a blessing. We might as well induce the Congress to effect unity with the Liberal Federation—if unity is to be desired under all conditions and circumstances.

In the present crisis, the most distressing phenomenon is the disruption within the ranks of those who were hitherto regarded as leftists. The immediate future will prove to be the acid tests of leftism to India. Those who will be found wanting will be soon exposed as pseudo-leftists. The members of the 'Forward Bloc,' too, will have to demonstrate by their work

and conduct that they are really forward and dynamic. It may be that in the ordeal that is ahead of us, some of those who are branded as rightists to-day, will prove to be genuine leftists—in action, I mean.

A word is necessary here in order to explain what we mean by leftism. The present age is the anti-imperialist phase of our movement. Our main task in this age is to end imperialism and win national independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be the socialist phase of our movement. In the present phase of our movement, leftists will be those who will wage an uncompromising fight with imperialism. Those who waver and vacillate in their struggle against imperialism—those who tend towards a compromise with it—cannot by any means be leftists. In the next phase of our movement, leftism will be synonymous with Socialism—but in the present phase the words "Leftist" and "Anti-Imperialist" should be interchangeable.

The problem of the hour is—"Will India still remain under the thumb of the rightists or will she swing to the left, once for all?" The answer to this can be furnished only by the leftists themselves. If they adopt a bold uncompromising policy in their struggle with imperialism regardless of all danger, difficulties and obstacles, then the leftists will make history and India will go left.

To those who may still be thinking of a compromise, the recent history of Ireland and the sequel to Anglo-Irish Treaty should prove highly instructive and edyfying. A compromise with imperialism will mean that an anti-imperialist national struggle will soon be converted into a civil war among the people themselves. Should that be desirable from any point of view ?

In the event of a compromise being effected with imperialism in this country Indian leftists will in future have to fight not only imperialism, but its new-fangled Indian allies as well. This will necessarily mean that the national struggle against imperialism will be converted into a civil war among the Indians themselves.

Let us take time by the forelock and let us act while it is not too late. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati has sounded the clarion call. Let us respond to it with all the strength and courage that we possess. From this Conference let us send out a warning to both imperialism and its Indian allies. The success of this Conference should mean the death-knell of compromise with imperialism.

Before we part, let us also set up a permanent machinery for imple-

menting the resolutions of this Conference and for waging an uncompromising war with imperialism. Everybody now realises that if the Working Committee of the Congress does not give the call for launching a national struggle—others will have to do so. It would therefore be in the fitness of things for this Conference to set up a permanent machinery for undertaking this responsibility—should the Working Committee fail us in this crisis. I hope and trust that the deliberations of this Conference will be a prelude to work and struggle on a nation-wide scale and on an All-India front.

INDIA FOR INDIANS *

Mr. Chairman and Friends,

I am deeply sensible of the honour you have done me by electing me as the President of the Indian National Congress for the coming year. I am not so presumptuous as to think for one moment that I am in any way worthy of that great honour. I regard it as a mark of your generosity and as a tribute to the youths of our country, but for whose cumulative contribution to our national struggle, we would not be where we are to-day. It is with a sense of fear and trepidation that I mount the tribune which has hitherto been graced by the most illustrious sons and daughters of our 'motherland'. Conscious as I am of my numerous limitations, I can only hope and pray that with your sympathy and support I may be able in some small measure to do justice to the high office which you have called upon me to fill.

At the outset, may I voice your feelings in placing on record our profound grief at the death of Shrimati Swarupreni Nehru, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose and Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji? Shrimati Swaruprani Nehru was to us not merely the worthy consort of Pandit Motilal and the revered mother of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Her suffering, sacrifice and service in the cause of India's freedom were such as any individual could feel proud of. As compatriots we mourn her death and our hearts go out in sympathy to Pandit Nehru and other members of the bereaved family.

To Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose India will always remain beholden for being the first to secure for her an honoured place in the modern scientific world. A nationalist to the core of his heart, Acharya Jagadish gave his life not merely to science, but to India as well. India knows it and is grateful for it. We convey our heartfelt sympathy to Lady Bose.

Through the untimely death of Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji, India has lost one of the brightest stars in her literary firmament. His name, for years a household word in Bengal, was not less known in the literary world of India. But if Sarat Babu was great as a litterateur, he was perhaps greater as a patriot. The Congress in Bengal is distinctly poorer to-day because of his death. We send our sincerest condolence to the members of his family.

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* The Presidential Address delivered by Shri Subhas Chandra Bose at the 51st Session of the Indian National Congress held at Haripura in February, 1938.

Before I proceed further I should like to bow my head in homage to the memory of those who have laid down their lives in the service of the country since the Congress met last year at Faizpur. I should mention especially those who died in prison or in internment or soon after release from internment. I should refer in particular to Sjt. Harendra Munshi, a political prisoner in the Dacca Central Jail, who laid down his life the other day as a result of hunger-strike. My feelings are still too lacerated to permit me to say much on this subject. I shall only ask you if there is not 'something rotten in the state of Denmark' that such bright and promising souls as Jatin Das, Sardar Mahabir Singh, Ramkrishna Namadas, Mohit Mohan Maitra, Harendra Munshi and others, should feel the urge not to live life but to end it.

When we take a bird's-eye view of the entire panorama of human history, the first thing that strikes us is the rise and fall of empires. In the East as well as in the West, empires have invariably gone through a process of expansion and after reaching the zenith of prosperity, have gradually shrunk into insignificance and sometimes death. The Roman Empire of the ancient times and the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian empires of modern period are striking examples of this law. The empires in India—the Maurya, Gupta and the Mogul empires—are no exception to this rule. In the face of these objective facts of history, can any one be so bold as to maintain that there is in store a different fate for the British Empire? That Empire stands to-day at one of the cross-roads of history. It will either go the way of other empires or it must transform itself into a federation of free nations. Either course is open to it. The Czarist empire collapsed in 1917 but out of its debris sprang the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There is still time for Great Britain to take a leaf out of Russian history. Will she do so ?

The British Empire is a hybrid phenomenon in politics. It is a peculiar combination of self-governing countries, partially self-governing dependencies and autocratically governed colonies. Constitutional device and human ingenuity may bolster up this combination for a while, but not for ever. If the internal incongruities are not removed in good time, then quite apart from external pressure, the empire is sure to break down under its own strain. But can the British Empire transform itself into a federation of free nations with one bold sweep? It is for the British people to answer this question. One thing, however, is certain. This transformation will be possible only if the British people become free in their own homes—only if Great Britain becomes a socialist state. There is an inseparable con-

nection between the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and the colonies abroad. As Lenin pointed out long ago, "reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations." The British aristocracy and bourgeoisie exist primarily because there are colonies and overseas dependencies to exploit. The emancipation of the latter will undoubtedly strike at the very existence of the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and precipitate the establishment of a socialist regime in that country. It should, therefore, be clear that a socialist order in Great Britain is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonialism and that we who are fighting for the political freedom of India and other enslaved countries of the British Empire are incidentally fighting for the economic emancipation of the British people as well.

It is a well-known truism that every empire is based on the policy of divide and rule. But I doubt if any empire in the world has practised this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly as Great Britain. In accordance with this policy, before power was handed over to the Irish people, Ulster was separated from the rest of Ireland. Similarly, before any power is handed over to the Palestinians, the Jews will be separated from the Arabs. An internal partition is necessary in order to neutralise the transference of power. The same principle of partition appears in a different form in the new Indian Constitution. Here we find an attempt to separate the different communities and put them into water-tight compartments. And in the Federal scheme there is juxtaposition of autocratic Princes and democratically elected representative from British India. If the new Constitution is finally rejected, whether owing to the opposition of British India or owing to the refusal of the Princes to joining it, I have no doubt that British ingenuity will seek some other constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralising the transference of power to the Indian people. Therefore, any constitution for India which emanates from Whitehall must be examined with the utmost care and caution.

The policy of divide and rule, though it has its obvious advantages, is by no means an unmixed blessing for the ruling power. As a matter of fact, it creates new problems and new embarrassments. Great Britain seems to be caught in the meshes of her own political dualism resulting from her policy of divide and rule. Will she please the Muslim or the Hindu in India? Will she favour the Arab or the Jew in Palestine—the Arab or the Kurd in Iraq? Will she side with the King or the Wafd in Egypt? The same dualism is visible outside the empire. In the case of Spain, British politicians are torn between such alternatives as Franco

and the lawful Government—and in the wider field of European politics, between France and Germany. The contradictions and inconsistencies in Britain's foreign policy are the direct outcome of the heterogeneous composition of her empire. The British Cabinet has to please the Jews because she cannot ignore Jewish high finance. On the other hand, the India Office and Foreign Office have to placate the Arabs because of Imperial interests in the Near East and in India. The only means whereby Great Britain can free herself from such contradictions and inconsistencies is by transforming the Empire into a federation of free nations. If she could do that, she would be performing a miracle in history. But if she fails, she must reconcile herself to the gradual dismemberment of a vast empire where the sun is supposed not to set. Let not the lesson of the Austro-Hungarian Empire be lost on the British people.

The British Empire at the present moment is suffering from strain at a number of points. Within the Empire in the Extreme West there is Ireland and in the Extreme East, India. In the middle lies Palestine with the adjoining countries of Egypt and Iraq. Outside the empire there is the pressure exerted by Italy in the Mediterranean and Japan in the Far East, both of these countries being militant, aggressive and imperialist. Against this background of unrest stands Soviet Russia whose very existence strikes terror into the heart of the ruling classes in every Imperialist State. How long can the British Empire withstand the cumulative effect of this pressure and strain?

To-day, Britain can hardly call herself "the Mistress of the Seas." Her phenomenal rise in the 18th and 19th centuries was the result of her sea power. Her decline as an empire in the 20th century will be the outcome of the emergence of a new factor in the world history—Air Force. It was due to this new factor, Air Force, that an impudent Italy could successfully challenge a fully mobilised British Navy in the Mediterranean. Britain can rearm on land, sea and air up to the utmost limit. Battleships may still stand up to bombing from the air, but air force as a powerful element in modern warfare has come to stay. Distances have been obliterated and despite all anti-aircraft defences, London lies at the mercy of any bombing squadron from a continental centre. In short, air force has revolutionised modern warfare, destroyed the insularity of Great Britain and rudely disturbed the balance of power in world politics. The clay feet of a gigantic empire now stands exposed as it has never been before.

Amid this interplay of world forces India emerges much stronger

than she has ever been before. Ours is a vast country with a population of 350 millions. Our vastness in area and in population has hitherto been a source of weakness. It is to-day a source of strength if we can only stand united and boldly face our rulers. From the standpoint of Indian unity the first thing to remember is that the division between British India and the Indian States is an entirely artificial one. India is one and the hopes and aspirations of the people of British India and of the Indian States are identical. Our goal is that of an independent India and in my view that goal can be attained only through a federal republic in which the Provinces and the States will be willing partners. The Congress has, time and again, offered its sympathy and moral support to the movement carried on by the States' subjects for the establishment of democratic government in what is known as Indian India. It may be that at this moment our hands are so full that the Congress is not in a position to do more for our compatriots in the States. But even to-day there is nothing to prevent individual Congressmen from actively espousing the cause of the States' subjects and participating in their struggle. There are people in the Congress like myself who would like to see the Congress participating more actively in the moment of the States' subjects. I personally hope that in the near future it will be possible for the Indian National Congress to take a forward step and offer a helping hand to our fellow-fighters in the States. Let us not forget that they need our sympathy and our help.

Talking of Indian unity the next thing that strikes us is the problem of the minorities. The Congress has, from time to time, declared its policy on this question. The latest authoritative pronouncement made by the All-India Congress Committee at its meeting in Calcutta in October, 1937, runs thus :

"The Congress has solemnly and repeatedly declared its policy in regard to the rights of the minorities in India and has stated that it considers it its duty to protect these rights and ensure the widest possible scope for the development of these minorities and their participation in the fullest measure in the political, economic and cultural life of the nation. The objective of the Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantage, and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of the people of India. This objective of unity and mutual co-operation in a common freedom does not mean the suppression in any way of the rich variety and cultural diversity of Indian life, which have to be preserved in order to give free-

dom and opportunity to the individual as well as to each group to develop unhindered according to its capacity and inclination.

"In view, however, of attempts having been made to misinterpret the Congress policy in this regard, the All-India Congress Committee desire to reiterate this policy. The Congress has included in its resolution on Fundamental Rights that—

(*i*) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for a purpose not opposed to law or morality;

(*ii*) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to the public order and morality;

(*iii*) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected;

(*iv*) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex;

(*v*) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling;

(*vi*) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State, or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public;

(*vii*) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions;

(*viii*) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage;

(*ix*) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

"These clauses of the Fundamental Rights resolution make it clear that there should be no interference in matters of conscience, religion, or culture, and a minority is entitled to keep its personal law without any change in this respect being imposed by the majority.

"The position of the Congress in regard to the Communal Decision has been repeatedly made clear in Congress resolutions and finally in the Election Manifesto issued last year. The Congress is opposed to this decision as it is anti-national, anti-democratic and is a barrier to Indian freedom and the development of Indian unity. Nevertheless the Con-

gress has declared that a change in or supersession of the Communal Decision should only be brought about by the mutual agreement of the parties concerned. The Congress has always welcomed and is prepared to take advantage of any opportunity to bring about such a change by mutual agreement.

"In all matters affecting the minorities in India, the Congress wishes to proceed by their co-operation and through their goodwill in a common undertaking and for the realization of a common aim which is the freedom and betterment of all the people of India."

The time is opportune for renewing our efforts for the final solution of this problem. I believe I am voicing the feelings of all Congressmen when I say that we are eager to do our very best to arrive at an agreed solution, consistent with the fundamental principles of nationalism. It is not necessary for me to go into details as to the lines on which a solution should take place. Much useful ground has already been covered in past conferences and conversations. I shall merely add that only by emphasising our common interests, economic and political, can we cut across communal divisions and dissensions. A policy of live and let live in matters religious and an understanding in matters economic and political should be our objective. Though the Muslim problem looms large whenever we think of the question of the minorities and though we are anxious to settle this problem finally, I must say that the Congress is equally desirous of doing justice to other minorities and especially the so-called depressed classes whose number is a very large one. I would put it to the members of the minority communities in India to consider dispassionately if they have anything to fear when the Congress programme, is put into operation. The Congress stands for the political and economic rights of the Indian people as a whole. If it succeeds in executing its programme, the minority-communities would be benefited as much as any other section of the Indian population. Moreover, if after the capture of political power, national reconstruction takes place on socialistic lines—as I have no doubt it will—it is the 'have-nots' who will benefit at the expense of the 'haves' and the Indian masses have to be classified among the 'have-nots'. There remains but one question which may be a source of anxiety to the minorities, *viz.*, religion and that aspect of culture that is based on religion. On this question the Congress policy is one of live and let live—a policy of complete non-interference in matters of conscience, religion and culture as well as of cultural autonomy for the different linguistic areas. The Muslims have, therefore, nothing to fear in the event of India winning her

freedom—on the contrary, they have everything to gain. So far as the religious and social disabilities of the so-called depressed classes are concerned, it is well-known that during the last 17 years the Congress has left no stone unturned in the effort to remove them, and I have no doubt that the day is not far off when such disabilities will be things of the past.

I shall now proceed to consider the method which the Congress should pursue in the years to come as well as its role in the national struggle. I believe more than ever that the method should be *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation in the widest sense of the term, including civil disobedience. It would not be correct to call our method passive resistance. *Satyagraha*, as I understand it, is not merely passive resistance but active resistance as well, though that activity must be of a non-violent character. It is necessary to remind our countrymen that *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation may have to be resorted to again. The acceptance of office in the provinces as an experimental measure should not lead us to think that our future activity is to be confined within the limits of strict constitutionalism. There is every possibility that a determined opposition to the forcible inauguration of federation may land us in another big campaign of civil disobedience.

In our struggle for independence we may adopt either of two alternatives. We may continue our fight until we have our full freedom and in the meantime decline to use any power that we may capture while on the march. We may, on the other hand, go on consolidating our position while we continue our struggle for Purna Swaraj or complete independence. From the point of view of principle, both the alternatives are equally acceptable and *a priori* considerations need not worry us. But we should consider very carefully at every stage as to which alternative would be more conducive to our national advancement. In either case, the ultimate stage in our progress will be the severance of the British connection. When that severance takes place and there is no trace left of British domination, we shall be in a position to determine our future relations with Great Britain through a treaty of alliance voluntarily entered into by both parties. What our future relations with Great Britain will or would be, it is too early to say. That will depend to a large extent on the attitude of the British people themselves. On this point I have been greatly impressed by the attitude of President de Valera. Like the President of Eire, I should also say that we have no enmity towards the British people. We are fighting Great Britain and we want the fullest liberty to determine our future relations with her. But once we have real self-determination, there is no

reason why we should not enter into the most cordial relation with the British people.

I am afraid there is a lack of clarity in the minds of many Congressmen as to the role of the Congress in the history of our national struggle. I know that there are friends who think that after freedom is won, the Congress party, having achieved its objective, should wither away. Such a conception is entirely erroneous. The party that wins freedom for India should be also the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction. Only those who have won power can handle it properly. If other people are pitchforked into seats of power which they were not responsible for capturing, they will lack that strength, confidence and idealism which is indispensable for revolutionary reconstruction. It is this which accounts for the difference in the record of the Congress and non-Congress ministries in the very narrow sphere of Provincial Autonomy.

No, there can be no question of the Congress party withering away after political freedom has been won. On the contrary, the party will have to take over power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil its role. If it were forcibly to liquidate itself, chaos would follow. Looking at post-war Europe we find that only in those countries has there been orderly and continuous progress where the party which seized power undertook the work of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstance, standing behind the state, will convert that state into a totalitarian one; but I cannot admit the charge. The state will possibly become a totalitarian one, if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should be banned. Moreover, the party itself will have a democratic basis, unlike for instance, the Nazi Party which is based on the "leader principle." The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress Party will prevent the future Indian State becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust upon the people from above, but are elected from below.

Though it may be somewhat premature to give a detailed plan of reconstruction, we might as well consider some of the principles according to which our future social reconstruction should take place. I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines. The very first thing which our future national government will have to do, would be to set

up a commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan of reconstruction. This plan will have two parts—an immediate programme and a long-period programme. In drawing up the first part, the immediate objectives which will have to be kept in view will be threefold—firstly, to prepare the country for self-sacrifice; secondly, to unify India! and thirdly, to give scope for local and cultural autonomy. The second and third objectives may appear to be contradictory, but they are not really so. Whatever political talent or genius we may possess as a people, will have to be used in reconciling these two objectives. We shall have to unify the country through a strong central government, we shall have to pull all the minority communities as well as the provinces at their ease, by allowing them a large measure of autonomy in cultural as well as governmental affairs. Special efforts will be needed to keep our people together when the load of foreign domination is removed, because alien rule has demoralised and disorganised us to a degree. To promote national unity we shall have to develop our *lingua franca* and a common script. Further, with the help of such modern scientific contrivances as aeroplanes, telephone, radio, films, television, etc., we shall have to bring the different parts of India closer to one another and through a common educational policy we shall have to foster a common spirit among the entire population. So far as our *lingua franca* is concerned, I am inclined to think that the distinction between Hindi and Urdu is an artificial one. The most natural *lingua franca* would be a mixture of the two, such as is spoken in daily life in large portions of the country and this common language may be written in either of the two scripts, Nagri or Urdu. I am aware that there are people in India who strongly favour either of the two scripts to the exclusion of the other. Our policy, however, should not be one of exclusion. We should allow the fullest latitude to use either script. At the same time, I am inclined to think that the ultimate solution would be the adoption of a script that would bring us into line with the rest of the world. Perhaps some of our countrymen will gape with horror when they hear of the adoption of the Roman script, but I would beg them to consider this problem from the scientific and historical point of view. If we do that, we shall realise at once that there is nothing sacrosanct in a script. The Nagri script, as we know it to-day, has passed through several phases of evolution. Besides, most of the major provinces of India have their own script and there is the Urdu script which is used largely by the Urdu-speaking public in India and by both Muslims and Hindus in Provinces like the Punjab and Sind. In view of such diversity, the choice of a uniform script for the whole of India should be made in a thoroughly scientific

and impartial spirit, free from bias of every kind. I confess that there was a time when I felt that it would be anti-national to adopt a foreign script. But my visit to Turkey in 1934 was responsible for converting me. I then realised for the first time what a great advantage it was to have the same script as the rest of the world. So far as our masses are concerned, since more than 90 per cent are illiterate and are not familiar with any script, it will not matter to them which script we introduce when they are educated. The Roman script will, moreover, facilitate their learning a European language. I am quite aware how unpopular the immediate adoption of the Roman script would be in our country. Nevertheless, I would beg my countrymen to consider what would be the wisest solution in the long run.

With regard to the long-period programme for a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population. I do not desire to go into the theoretical question as to whether India is overpopulated or not. I simply want to point out that where poverty, starvation and disease are stalking the land, we cannot afford to have our population mounting up by thirty millions during a single decade. If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. It will, therefore, be desirable to restrict our population until we are able to feed, clothe and educate those who already exist. It is not necessary at this stage to prescribe the methods that should be adopted to prevent a further increase in population, but I would urge that public attention be drawn to this question.

Regarding reconstruction, our principal problem will be how to eradicate poverty from our country. That will require a radical reform of our land-system, including the abolition of landlordism. Agricultural indebtedness will have to be liquidated and provision made for cheap credit for the rural population. An extension of the co-operative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers. Agriculture will have to be put on a scientific basis with a view to increasing the yield from the land.

To solve the economic problem agricultural improvement will not be enough. A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownerships and state-control will be indispensable. A new industrial system will have to be built up in place of the old one which has collapsed as a result of mass production abroad and alien rule at home. The Planning Commission will have to carefully consider and decide which of the home industries could be revived despite the competition of modern factories and in which sphere, large-scale production should be encouraged. How-

ever much we may dislike modern industrialism and condemn the evils which follow in its train, we cannot go back to the pre-industrial era, even if we desire to do so. It is well, therefore, that we should reconcile ourselves to industrialisation and devise means to minimise its evils and at the same time explore the possibilities of reviving cottage industries where there is possibility of their surviving the inevitable competition of factories. In a country like India, there will be plenty of room for cottage industries, especially in the case of industries including hand-spinning and hand-weaving allied to agriculture.

Last but not least, the State on the advice of a Planning Commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socialising our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation. Extra capital will have to be procured for this, whether through internal or external loans or through inflation.

Opposing or resisting the provincial part of the constitution will be hardly possible now, since the Congress Party has accepted office in seven out of eleven provinces.

All that could be done would be to strengthen and consolidate the Congress as a result of it. I am one of those who were not in favour of taking office—not because there was something inherently wrong in doing so, not because no good could come out of that policy, but because it was apprehended that the evil effects of office-acceptance would outweigh the good. To-day I can only hope that my forebodings were unfounded.

How can we strengthen and consolidate the Congress while our Ministers are in office? The first thing to do is to change the composition and character of the bureaucracy. If this is not done, the Congress Party may come to grief. In every country, the Ministers come and go, but the steel-frame of the permanent services remains. If that is not altered in composition and character, the governmental party and its cabinet are likely to prove ineffective in putting their principles into practice. This is what happened in the case of the Social Democratic Party in Post-war Germany and perhaps in the case of the Labour Party in Great Britain in 1924 and 1929. It is the permanent services who really rule in every country. In India they have been created by the British and in the higher ranks they are largely British in composition. Their outlook and mentality are in most cases neither Indian nor national and a national policy cannot be executed until the permanent services become national in outlook and mentality. The difficulty, of course, will be that the higher ranks of the permanent services being, under the Statute, directly under the Secretary of State for India

and not under the provincial governments, it will not be easy to alter their composition.

Secondly, the Congress Ministers in the different provinces should, while they are in office, introduce schemes of reconstruction in the spheres of education, health, prohibition, prison reform, irrigation, industry, land reform, workers' welfare, etc. In this matter, attempts should be made to have, as far as possible, a uniform policy for the whole of India. This uniformity could be brought about in either of two ways. The Congress Ministers in the different provinces could themselves come together—as the Labour Ministers did in October, 1937 in Calcutta—and draw up a uniform programme. Over and above this, Congress Working Committee, which is the supreme executive of the Congress, could lend a helping hand by giving directions to the different departments of the Congress-controlled provincial governments in the light of such advice as it may get from its own experts. This will mean that the members of the Congress Working Committee should be conversant with the problems that come within the purview of the Congress governments in the provinces. It is not intended that they should go into the details of administration. All that is needed is that they should have a general understanding of the different problems so that they could lay down the broad lines of policy. In this respect, the Congress Working Committee could do much more than it has hitherto done and unless it does so, I do not see how that body can keep an effective control over the different Congress ministries.

At this stage I should like to say something more about the role of the Congress Working Committee. This Committee, in my judgment, is not merely the directing brain of the national army of fighters for freedom. It is also the Shadow Cabinet of Independent India and it should function accordingly. This is not an invention of my own. It is the role which has been assigned to similar bodies in other countries that have fought for their national emancipation. I am one of those who think in terms of a Free India—who visualise a national government in this country within the brief span of our own life. It is consequently natural for us to urge that the Working Committee should feel and function as the Shadow Cabinet of a Free India. This is what President de Valera's republican government did when it was fighting the British Government and was on the run. And this is what the Executive of the Wafd Party in Egypt did before it got into office. The members of the Working Committee while carrying on their day-to-day work should accordingly study the problems they will have to tackle in the event of their capturing political power.

More important than the question of the proper working of the Congress Governments is the immediate problem as how to oppose the inauguration of the federal part of the Constitution. The Congress attitude towards the proposed federal scheme has been clearly stated in the resolution adopted by the Working Committee at Wardha on February 4, 1938, which will be placed before this Congress after the Subjects Committee has considered it. That resolution says:—

"The Congress has rejected the new Constitution and declared that a constitution for India which can be accepted by the people must be based on Independence and can only be framed by the people themselves by means of Constituent Assembly without the interference by any foreign authority. Adhering to this policy of rejection, the Congress has, however, permitted the formation in Provinces of Congress Ministries with a view to strengthening the nation in its struggle for Independence. In regard to the proposed federation, no such consideration applies even provisionally, or for a period, and the imposition of this Federation, will do grave injuries to India and tighten the bonds which hold her under the subjection of an imperialist domination. This scheme of Federation excludes from the sphere of responsibility the vital function of a Government.

"The Congress is not opposed to the idea of Federation, but a real Federation must, even apart from the question of responsibility, consist of free units, enjoying more or less the same measure of freedom and civil liberty and representation by a democratic process of election. Indian States participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions, responsible Government, civil liberties and the method of election to the Federal House. Otherwise Federation as it is now contemplated will, instead of building Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflict.

"The Congress, therefore, reiterates its condemnation of the proposed scheme and calls upon Provincial and local Congress Committees and the people generally as well as Provincial Governments and Ministries, to prevent its inauguration.

"In the event of an attempt being made to impose it, despite the declared will of the people, such an attempt must be combated in every way and the Provincial Governments and Ministries must refuse to cooperate with it.

"In case such a contingency arises, the A.-I.C.C. is authorised and directed to determine the line of action to be pursued in this regard."

I should like to add some more arguments to explain our attitude of uncompromising hostility towards the proposed Federation. One of the most objectionable features of the Federal Scheme relates to the commercial and financial safeguards in the new Constitution. Not only will the people continue to be deprived of any power over defence or foreign policy, but the major portion of the expenditure will also be entirely out of popular control. According to the budget of the Central Government for the year 1937-38, the army expenditure comes to 44.61 crores of Rupees (£33.46 millions) out of a total expenditure of 77.90 crores of rupees (£58.42 millions) that is, roughly 57 per cent of the total expenditure of the Central Government. It appears that the reserved side of Federal Government which will be controlled by the Governor-General will handle about 80 per cent of the Federal expenditure. Moreover, bodies like the Reserve Bank and the Federal Railway Authority are already created or will be created which will work as *imperium in imperio* uncontrolled by a Federal Legislature. The Legislature will be deprived of the powers it possesses at present to direct and influence railway policy, and it will not have any voice in determining the currency and exchange policy of the country which has a vital bearing on its economic development.

The fact that external affairs will be a reserved subject under the Federal Government will prejudicially affect the freedom of the Indian Legislature to conclude trade agreements and will seriously restrict, in effect, fiscal autonomy. The Federal Government will not be under any constitutional obligation to place such trade agreements before the Legislature for their ratification, even as they decline at present to give an undertaking to place the Indo-British Trade Agreement before the Indian Legislative Assembly. The so-called fiscal autonomy convention will have no meaning unless it is stipulated that no trade agreement on behalf of India shall be signed by any party without its ratification by the Indian Legislature. In this connection, I should like to state that I am definitely of opinion that India should enter into bilateral trade agreements with countries like Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy and the United States of America with whom she has had close trade relations in the past. But under the new Constitution, it will not be within the power of the Federal Legislature to force the Federal Government to enter into such bilateral trade agreements.

The iniquitous and inequitable commercial safeguards embodied in the Act will make it impossible for any effective measures to be adopted in order to protect and promote Indian national industries especially where

they might, as they often do, conflict with British commercial or industrial interests. In addition to the Governor-General's special responsibility to see that provisions with regard to discrimination, as laid down in the Act, are duly carried out, it is also his duty to prevent any action which would subject British goods imported into India to any kind of discriminatory or penal treatment. A careful study of these stringent and wide provisions will show that India can adopt no measures against British competition which the Governor-General cannot, in effect, stultify or veto whether in the legislative or in the administrative sphere. It is, of course, preposterous to permit foreigners in this country to compete with the nationals on equal terms and there can be no genuine *Swaraj* if India is to be denied the power to devise and adopt a national economic policy including the right, if her interests so require, of differentiating between nationals and non-nationals. In a famous article in *Young India* under the caption "The Giant and the Dwarf" written soon after the conclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931, Mahatma Gandhi declared plainly that "to talk of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European, is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf?" Even the meagre powers enjoyed by the Central Legislature at present to enact a measure like the reservation of the Indian coastal trade for Indian-owned and Indian-managed vessels has been taken away under the so-called reformed Constitution. Shipping is a vital industry which is essential for defensive as well as for economic purposes, but all the accepted and legitimate methods of developing this key industry including those adopted even by several British Dominions, are henceforth rendered impossible for India. To justify such limitations on our sovereignty on the ground of "reciprocity" and "partnership" is literally to add insult to injury. The right of the future Indian Parliament to differentiate or discriminate between nationals and non-nationals, whenever Indian interests require it, should remain intact and this right we cannot sacrifice on any account. I would like in this connection to cite the Irish parallel. The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1935 provides for a distinct Irish citizenship in connection with the electoral system, entry into public life, merchant shipping law, aircraft as also in connection with special privileges which it is thought proper to reserve for Irish nationals, such as those conferred through measures for assisting Irish industry. Irish citizenship, in other words, is distinct from British, which cannot claim equal rights in the State of Eire (or Ireland) on the basis of British citizenship which is not recognised there. I feel that

India must similarly seek to develop her own distinct nationality and establish a citizenship of her own.

While on the question of fiscal autonomy and commercial safeguards, I might refer briefly to the need of an active foreign trade policy for India. India's foreign trade should be viewed not in a haphazard or piecemeal manner as is often done in order to provide some immediate or temporary benefit to British industry, but in a comprehensive manner so as to co-ordinate India's economic development with its export trade on the one hand and its external obligation on the other. The very nature of India's export trade makes it essential that it shall not have any restrictive agreement with England such as would jeopardise its trade with the various non-Empire countries which have been in several respects its best customers, or such as would tend to weaken India's bargaining power *vis-a-vis* other countries. It is unfortunate that the protracted negotiations for an Indo-British Trade Agreement are still proceeding, while the Ottawa Agreement, even after the expiry of its notice period and despite the decision of the Legislative Assembly to terminate it, still continues, and along with the differential duties on British steel and textiles, the said Ottawa Agreement secures the prevailing advantages for British industries. There is no doubt that under the existing political conditions, any trade agreement between England and India is bound to be of an unequal character because our present political relationship would weigh the scales heavily in favour of England. There is also no doubt that the British preferential system is political in origin and before we permit non-Indian vested interests to be established or consolidated in this country under the shelter of a trade agreement, we should be careful as to its political repercussions and economic consequences. I trust that the present Indo-British Trade negotiations will not be allowed to impede the conclusion of bilateral trade agreements with other countries whenever possible and that no such trade agreement will be signed by the Government of India unless it is ratified by the Indian Legislature.

From the above, it will be quite clear that there is no analogy between the powers of the provincial ministries and those of the proposed federal ministry. Moreover, the composition of the Federal Legislature is reactionary to a degree. The total population of the Indian States is roughly 24 per cent of that of the whole of India. Nevertheless, the Rulers of the States, not their subjects, have been given 33 per cent of the seats in the Lower House and 40 per cent in the Upper House of the Federal Legislature. In these circumstances, there is no possibility, in my opinion, of

the Congress altering its attitude towards the Federal Scheme at any time. On our success in resisting the imposition of Federation by the British Government will depend our immediate political future. We have to fight Federation by all legitimate and peaceful means—not merely along constitutional lines—and in the last resort, we may have to resort to mass civil disobedience which is the ultimate sanction we have in our hands. There can be little doubt that in the event of such a campaign being started in the future, the movement will not be confined to British India but will spread among the States' subjects.

To put up an effective fight in the near future, it is necessary to put our own house in order. The awakening among our masses during the last few years has been so tremendous that new problems have arisen concerning our party organisation. Meetings attended by fifty thousand men and women are an usual occurrence now-a-days. It is sometimes found that to control such meetings and demonstrations, our machinery is not adequate. Apart from these passing demonstrations, there is the bigger problem of mobilising this phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and directing them along proper lines. But have we got a well-disciplined Volunteer Corps for this purpose? Have we got a cadre of officers for our national service ? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers ? The answers to these questions are too patent to need elaboration. We have not yet provided all these requirements of a modern political party, but it is high time that we did. A disciplined Volunteer Corps manned by trained officers is exceedingly necessary. Moreover, education and training should be provided for our political workers so that we may produce a better type of leaders in future. This sort of training is provided by political parties in Britain through Summer Schools and other institutions—and is a speciality in totalitarian states. With all respect to our workers who have played a glorious part in our struggle, I must confess that there is room for more talent in our party. This defect can be made up partly by recruiting promising young men for the Congress and partly by providing education and training for those whom we already have. Everybody must have observed how some European countries have been dealing with this problem. Though our ideals and methods of training are quite different from theirs, it will be admitted on all hands that a thorough, scientific training is a requisite for our workers. Further, an institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study and, with suitable modification, may prove beneficial to India.

While dealing with the question of enforcing discipline within our own party, we have to consider a problem which has been causing worry and embarrassment to many of us. I am referring to organisations like the Trade Union Congress and the *Kisan Sabhas* and their relations with the Indian National Congress. There are two opposing schools of thought on this question—those who condemn any organisations that are outside the Congress and those who advocate them. My own view is that we cannot abolish such organisations by ignoring or condemning them. They exist as objective facts and since they have come into existence and show no signs of liquidating themselves, it should be manifest that there is an historical necessity behind them. Moreover, such organisations are to be found in other countries. I am afraid that whether we like it or not, we have to reconcile ourselves to their existence. The only question is how the Congress should treat them. Obviously, such organisations should not appear as a challenge to the National Congress which is the organ of mass struggle for capturing political power. They should, therefore, be inspired by Congress ideals and methods and work in close co-operation with the Congress. To ensure this, Congress workers should in large numbers participate in trade union and peasant organisations. From my own experience of trade union work I feel that this could easily be done without landing oneself in conflict or inconsistency. Co-operation between the Congress and the other two organisations could be facilitated if the latter deal primarily with the economic grievances of the workers and peasants and treat the Congress as a common platform for all those who strive for the political emancipation of their country.

This brings us to the vexed problem of the collective affiliation of workers' and peasants' organisations to the Congress. Personally, I hold the view that the day will come when we shall have to grant this affiliation in order to bring all progressive and anti-imperialist organisations under the influence and control of the Congress. There will, of course, be difference of opinion as to the manner and the extent to which this affiliation should be given and the character and stability of such organisations will have to be examined before affiliation could be agreed to. In Russia, the united front of the Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers played a dominant part in the October revolution—but, on the contrary, in Great Britain we find that the British Trade Union Congress exerts a moderating influence on the National Executive of the Labour Party. In India we shall have to consider carefully what sort of influence organisations like the Trade Union Congress and the *Kisan Sabhas* will exert on the

Indian National Congress in the event of affiliation being granted and we should not forget that there is the possibility that the former may not have a radical outlook if their immediate economic grievances are not involved. In any case, quite apart from the question of collective affiliation, there should be the closest co-operation between the National Congress and other anti-imperialist organisations and this object would be facilitated by the latter adopting the principles and methods of the former.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the question of forming a party, like the Congress Socialist Party, within the Congress. I hold no brief for the Congress Socialist Party and I am not a member of it. Nevertheless, I must say that I have been in agreement with its general principles and policy from the very beginning. In the first place, it is desirable for the leftist elements to be consolidated into one party. Secondly, a leftist *bloc* can have a *raison d'etre* only if it is socialist in character. There are friends who object to such *bloc* being called a party, but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that *bloc* a group, league or party. Within the limits prescribed by the Constitution of the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a leftist *bloc* to have a socialist programme, in which case it can be very well called a group, league or party. But the role of the Congress Socialist Party, or any other party of the same sort, should be that of a left-wing group. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us—nevertheless, socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the country for socialism when political freedom has been won. And that propaganda can be conducted only by a party like the Congress Socialist Party, which stands for and believes in Socialism.

There is one problem in which I have been taking a deep personal interest for some years and in connection with which I should like to make my submission—I mean the question of a foreign policy for India and of developing international contacts. I attach great importance to this work because I believe that in the years to come, international developments will favour our struggle in India. But we must have a correct appreciation of the world situation at every stage and should know how to take advantage of it. The lesson of Egypt stands before us as an example. Egypt won her Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain without firing a shot, simply because she knew how to take advantage of the Anglo-Italian tension in the Mediterranean.

In connection with our foreign policy, the first suggestion that I have to make is that we should not be influenced by the internal politics of any

country or the form of its state. We shall find in every country men and women who will sympathise with Indian freedom, no matter what their own political views may be. In this matter we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a communist state, her diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with non-socialist states and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should therefore aim at developing a nucleus of men and women in every country who feel sympathetic towards India. To create and develop such a nucleus, propaganda through the foreign press, through Indian-made films and through art exhibitions would be helpful. The Chinese, for example, have made themselves exceedingly popular in Europe through their art exhibitions. Above all, personal contacts are necessary. Without such personal contacts, it would be difficult to make India popular in other countries. Indian students abroad could also help in this work, provided we in India look to their needs and requirements. There should be closer contact between Indian students abroad and the Indian National Congress at home. If we could send out cultural and educational films made in India, I am sure that India and her culture would become known and appreciated by people abroad. Such films would prove exceedingly useful to Indian students and Indian residents in other countries, who at present are like our non-official ambassadors.

I do not like the word propaganda—there is an air of falsity about it. But I insist that we should make India and her culture known to the world. I say this because I am aware that such efforts will be welcomed in every country in Europe and America. If we go ahead with this work, we shall be preparing the basis for our future embassies and legations in different lands. We should not neglect Great Britain either. We have even in that country a small but influential group of men and women who are genuinely sympathetic towards Indian aspirations. Among the rising generation, and students in particular, interest in, and sympathy for, India is rapidly on the increase. One has only to visit the Universities of Great Britain to realise that.

To carry on this work effectively, the Indian National Congress should have its trusted agents in Europe, Asia, Africa and in North, Central and South America. It is a pity that we have so far neglected Central and South America where there is profound interest in India. The Congress should be assisted in this work of developing international contacts by cultural organisations in India, working in the field of international culture and by the Indian Chambers of Commerce working in the sphere of inter-

national commerce. Further, Indians should make it a point to attend every International Congress or Conference; participation in such conference is a very useful and healthy form of propaganda for India.

While talking of international contacts, I should remove a misgiving which may be present in some minds. Developing international contacts does not mean intriguing against the British Government. We do not need go in for such intrigues and all our methods should be above board. The propaganda that goes on against India all over the world is to the effect that India is an uncivilized country and it is inferred therefrom that the British are needed in order to civilize us. As a reply, we have only to let the world know what we are and what our culture is like. If we can do that, we shall create such a volume of international sympathy in our favour that India's case will become irresistible before the bar of world opinion.

I should not forget to refer to the problems, the difficulties and the trials which face our countrymen in different parts of Asia and Africa—notably in Zanzibar, Kenya, South Africa, Malaya and Ceylon. The Congress has always taken the keenest interest in their affairs and will continue to do so in future. If we have not been able to do more for them, it is only because we are still slaves at home. A free India will be healthy and potent factor in world politics and will be able to look after the interests of its nationals abroad.

I must in this connection stress the desirability and necessity of developing closer cultural relations with our neighbours—*viz.*, Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal, China, Burma, Siam, Malaya States, East Indies and Ceylon. It would be good for both parties if they knew more of us and we knew more of them. With Burma and Ceylon, in particular, we should have the most intimate cultural intercourse, in view of our age-long contacts.

Friends, I am sorry I have taken more of your time than I had intended at first, but I am now nearing the end of my address. There is one important matter—the burning topic of the day—to which I should now draw your attention—the question of the release of detenus and political prisoners. The recent hunger-strikes have brought this question to the forefront and have focussed public attention on it. I believe that I am voicing the feelings of at least the rank and file of the Congress when I say that everything humanly possible should be done to expedite release. So far as the Congress ministries are concerned, it would be well to note that the record of some of them has not come up to public expectation. The sooner they satisfy the public demand, the better it will be for the Con-

gress and for the people who are suffering in provinces ruled by non-Congress ministries. It is not necessary for me to labour this point and I fervently hope that in the immediate future, the public will have nothing to complain of so far as the record of the Congress ministries on this point is concerned.

It is not only the detenus and political prisoners in jail and detention who have their tale of woe. The lot of those who have been released is sometimes no better. They often return home in shattered health, victims of fell diseases like Tuberculosis. Grim starvation stares them in the face and they are greeted, not with the smiles but with the tears of near and dear ones. Have we no duty to those who have given of their best in the service of their country and have received nothing but poverty and sorrow in return ? Let us, therefore, send our heartfelt sympathy to all those who have suffered for the crime of loving their country and let us all contribute our humble mite towards the alleviation of their misery.

Friends, one word more and I have done. We are faced with a serious situation to-day. Inside the Congress there are differences between the right and the left which it would be futile to ignore. Outside, there is the challenge of British Imperialism which we are called upon to face. What shall we do in this crisis ? Need I say that we have to stand four-square against all the storms that may beset our path and be impervious to all the designs that our rulers may employ ? The Congress to-day is the one supreme organ of mass struggle. It may have its right *bloc* and its left—but it is the common platform for all anti-imperialist organisations striving for Indian emancipation. Let us, therefore, rally the whole country under the banner of the Indian National Congress. I would appeal specially to the leftist groups in the country to pool all their strength and their resources for democratising the Congress and reorganising it on the broadest anti-imperialist basis. In making this appeal, I am greatly encouraged by the attitude of the leaders of the British Communist Party whose general policy with regard to India seems to me to be in keeping with that of the Indian Congress.

In conclusion, I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many, many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people united. We need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness and hatred. We need him for the cause of Indian Independence. What is more—we need him for the cause of humanity. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperial-

ism but against world Imperialism as well, of which the former is the keystone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved.

Bande Mataram



Mahatma Gandhi treating a Leprosy patient



Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi at Noakhali

FATHER OF OUR NATION ! WE ASK FOR YOUR BLESSINGS !*

Mahatmaji ! After the sad demise of Srimati Kasturba in British custody, it was but natural for your countrymen to be alarmed over the state of your health... For Indians outside India, differences in method are like domestic differences. Ever since you sponsored the Independence Resolution at the Lahore Congress in December, 1929, all members of the Indian National Congress have had one common goal before them. For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India and by foreign friends of India's freedom, was increased a hundredfold when you bravely sponsored the "Quit India" Resolution in August, 1942.

It would be a fatal mistake on our part to make a distinction between the British Government and the British people. No doubt there is a small group of idealists in Britain—as in the U.S.A.—who would like to see India free. These idealists, who are treated by their own people as cranks, form a microscopic minority. So far as India is concerned. for all practical purposes, the British Government and the British people mean one and the same thing. Regarding the war aims of the U.S.A., I may say that the ruling clique at Washington is now dreaming of world domination. This ruling clique and its intellectual exponents, talk openly of the American Century. In this ruling clique, there are extremists who go so far as to call Britain the 49th State of the U.S.A.

I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that before I finally decided to set out on this hazardous mission, I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the *pros* and *cons* of the case. After having served my people so long, to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor, or to give anyone a justification for calling me a traitor.

Thanks to the generosity and to the affection of my countrymen, I had obtained the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. I had also built up a party consisting of staunch and loyal colleagues who had implicit confidence in me. By going abroad on a perilous quest I was risking not only my life and my whole future career,

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* In the above words Netaji asked blessing of Mahatma Gandhi through his address over the radio on July 6, 1944.

but what, was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we could win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our life-time we could get another chance—another golden opportunity—for winning freedom, as during the present war, I doubt if we would have set out from home...

There remains but one question for me to answer with regard to the Axis Powers. Can it be possible that I have been deceived by them ? I believe it will be universally admitted that the cleverest and the most cunning politicians are to be found amongst Britishers. One who has worked with and fought British politicians all his life, cannot be deceived by any other politicians in the world. If British politicians have failed to coax or coerce me, no other politician can succeed in doing so. And if the British Government, at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assault, has been unable to demoralize me no other power can hope to do so...

I have never done anything which could compromise in the least, either the honour or the self-respect or the interests of my country.

"There was a time when Japan was an ally of our enemy. I did not come to Japan, so long as there was an Anglo-Japanese Alliance. I did not come to Japan, so long as normal diplomatic relations obtained between the two countries. It was only after Japan took what I consider to be the most momentous step in her history, namely, declaration of war on Britain and America, that I decided to visit Japan of my own free will. Like so many of my countrymen, my sympathies in 1937 and 1938 were with Chungking. You may remember that as President of the Congress I was responsible for sending out a Medical Mission to Chungking in December, 1938.

"Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her declaration of policy had been mere promises...

Mahatmaji, I should now like to say something about the Provisional Government that we have set up here. The Provisional Government has, as its one objective, the liberation of India from British yoke, through struggle. Once our enemies are expelled from India, and peace and order is established, the mission of the Provisional Government will be over. The only reward that we desire for our efforts, for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from the political field, once India is free.

"Nobody would be more happy than ourselves, if by chance our countrymen at home should succeed in liberating themselves through their own effort, or if by any chance, the British Government accepts your 'Quit India' Resolution and gives effect to it. We are, however, proceeding on the assumption that neither of the above is possible and that an armed struggle is inevitable. India's last war of independence has begun. Troops of the *Azad Hind Fauz* are now fighting bravely on the soil of India, and in spite of all difficulty and hardship, they are pushing forward slowly but steadily. This armed struggle will go on, until the last Britisher is thrown out of India and until our Tri-Colour National Flag proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

Father of our nation! In this holy war for India's liberation we ask for your blessing and good wishes."

THE MORAL PROTEST *

*First Letter**

1. I have been in jail for about four months under a section of the D. I. Rules which does not necessitate a trial by a court of law. Over and above that, I have been an under-trial prisoner for the last two months. Detention without trial under one section and prosecution under another section of the above Rules—constitute a combination of executive fiat and judicial procedure which is not only unprecedented, but is manifestly illegal and unjust.

2. Further, when bail applications were made before the trying Magistrates, the Public Prosecutor opposed them, presumably under instructions from the Local Government, with the result that the applications were not granted. This is an evidence of undue Government interference in the course of judicial proceedings. This interference is all the more objectionable because the Local Government are not giving effect to the instructions issued by the Government of India with regard to cases under the D. I. Rules.

3. It is unfair, unjust and illegal to forcibly detain me in prison in this manner when I am being prosecuted. Once I have been produced before a court on the charge of offending against the D. I. Rules, the law should be allowed to take its own course. How can I again be imprisoned without trial under the same D. I. Rules?

4. It is surprising and painful that all this is happening under the aegis of a "popular" ministry. I have been watching how the self-same ministry has been behaving in the case of citizens professing the Islamic faith—particularly when they happen to be members of the Muslim League. It is not necessary to furnish Government with numerous relevant instances, culminating in the sudden release of the Maulvi of Murapara in Dacca district. Every single instance of this sort has been duly noted by me.

5. In view of these and numerous other considerations, Government should release me forthwith. My election to the Indian Legislative Assembly also demands that I should be permitted to attend its sittings which commence on the 5th November—of course, health permitting. If

* Si. Subhas Chandra Bose, while detained in the Presidency Jail, Calcutta, addressed this letter on October 30, 1940, to the Home Minister of the Bengal Government, through the Superintendent of Presidency Jail.

the Burma Government could allow a convicted prisoner to attend the Assembly sittings—should not the "popular" ministry of Bengal allow the same facilities to one who is not a convicted prisoner?

6. Last, but not least, my continued detention in the present state of my health is nothing short of a vindictive policy on the part of Government which is altogether inexplicable to me.

This letter is written in all seriousness and I pray that it be given the consideration that it deserves.

*Second Letter**

I have addressed the Hon'ble the Home Minister to-day on the question of my continued detention in jail. I desire that along with that letter, Government should be informed of the consequences, for me, of their refusal to withdraw the order of detention. I am, therefore, writing this to you with the request that you may kindly bring the contents to the notice of Government as confidentially as possible. I am sending it to your office under closed cover, so that nobody else may see it. This letter is not a threat and I hope it will not be treated as such. It is meant to be a frank communication regarding certain developments which may soon become unavoidable for me.

I do not expect that Government will be moved by the considerations mentioned or implied in my letter to the Hon'ble the Home Minister. I have, therefore, been pondering for the last two months over the course of action that I should adopt. There is no other alternative for me but to register a moral protest against an unjust act and as a proof of that protest, to undertake a voluntary fast. This fast will have no effect on the "popular" ministry, because I am neither the Maulvi of Murapara (Dacca)—nor even a Muhammedan by faith. Consequently, the fast will in my case become a fast unto death. I know that even that will not move this Government and I have no illusions on this point. The "popular" ministry like other bureaucratic Governments will raise the question of official prestige and the familiar argument will be trotted out that Government cannot be coerced by a fast. I was in England when Terence Macswiney, a Lord Mayor of Cork, was on hunger-strike on similar issue. The whole country was moved—all the political parties in Parliament and H. M. the King also were visibly affected, but Lloyd George's Government was adamant. As a consequence, the King had to declare publicly that because

* Sj. Bose addressed this letter to the Superintendent of Presidency Jail, on the 30th October, 1940.

of the Cabinet's attitude, he could not exercise the Royal Prerogative. I am recounting all this just to convince you and the Government that I have examined the whole situation in the cold light of common sense and logic and that I have not been thinking light-heartedly.

Thus, while I do not expect any tangible result to follow from the fast, I shall have the satisfaction of recording a moral protest against iniquitous action of Government. Britishers and the British Government have been talking of upholding the sacred principles of freedom and democracy, but their policy nearer home belies these professions. They want our assistance to destroy Nazism—but they have been indulging in super-Nazism. My protest will serve to expose the hypocrisy underlying their policy in this unfortunate country, as also the policy of a Provincial Government that calls itself "popular", but which in reality can be moved only when there is a Muhammedan in the picture. Incidentally, I shall have the further satisfaction that my fast and its sequel shall have repercussions outside India, for I happen to be one of the Indians known outside the frontiers of this country.

The only other point to consider is as to whether the remedy suggested is not worse than the disease and I have taken long days and nights to ponder over it. My answer to the question is that life under existing conditions is hardly worth living. In this mortal world, everything perishes except principles. These principles can live only when individuals do not hesitate to die for them. When individuals perish for a sacred principle, that principle does not die—but incarnates itself in other individuals. And it is through vicarious suffering alone that a cause can flourish and prosper. Just as flesh begets flesh—so also does spirit begets kindred spirits. Consequently, if I have anything worthy in me, neither my country nor humanity will lose as a result of my death. On the contrary, God willing, they may be elevated to higher moral plane for, after all, the highest sacrifice that one can make is the voluntary sacrifice of one's life without taking the life of another.

One word more before I finish. I have been in jail for long periods and have also been on hunger-strike before. I know all the steps that over-zealous officials sometimes take in order to frustrate the object of hunger-strike. Naturally I shall be prepared for them in advance. Moreover, I shall not permit forced feeding. Nobody has any moral right to feed me by force. This point was thrashed out with the British Cabinet in the case of Terence Macswiney and at a later period with the Government of India during our hunger strike of 1926. Any circulars or Jail Code pro-

visions which may have come into existence since then, will have no binding effect on me.

I repeat that this letter written on the sacred day of Kali Pujah should not be treated as a threat or ultimatum. It is merely an affirmation of one's faith written in all humility. Hence it should be handled as a confidential document to be so communicated to Government confidentially. I only desire that the Government should know how my mind has been working so that they may appreciate my motives as well as the consequences for me of their decision.

Thanking you for your uniform courtesy.

*Third Letter**

I hope you have duly forwarded to Government the confidential letter I wrote to you on the 30th October last—the day of Kali Pujah. This is in continuation of that letter and both the letters are to be read in conjunction with my letter to the Hon'ble the Home Minister on the same date, *viz.*, 30th October.

2. Since I wrote to you, the Government of India have made it clear in connection with the adjournment motion tabled by Pandit L. K. Moitra, M.L.A. (Central) before the Indian Legislative Assembly that the responsibility for my arrest and imprisonment rests exclusively with the Government of Bengal which is claimed by its supporters to be controlled and run by a "popular" ministry. It is clear that the way I have been treated by this "popular" Government is unique and unprecedented in this country and violates the instructions of the Government of India in using the D. I. Rules not for defending India but in order to shield a procedure that is at once illegal and unjust.

3. Yesterday, when an application for bail was made by my lawyers, the trying Magistrate at Bankshall Court granted the application, but was constrained to remark that his order would remain infructuous because of the action of the Government in detaining me without trial under section 26 of the D. I. Rules. I cannot conceive of a more flagrant example of interference in judicial procedure on the part of the Executive. Were the D. I. Rules enacted for "defending" India or for "defending" injustice and illegality of this sort? I wonder.

4. I am sorry that this Government have perpetrated another wrong by supplying the Secretary of State for India with incorrect information

* This letter was addressed to the Superintendent of Presidency Jail, Calcutta, on the 14th November, 1940.

about my arrest and detention. As is already known, in reply to Mr. Sorensen's query, the Secretary of State announced in the House of Commons, on the basis of the information received by him, that I had been taken into custody in connection with the Holwell Monument affair. If the whole truth had been told, then one would have heard more on the subject in England, for I have friends there, both in the Commons and among the general public.

5. For the vindication of what I consider to be a legitimate right, there is now but one course open to me, *viz.*, to content myself with recording a moral protest—since every other door has been banged on me by the "popular" Government. Consequently, as already intimated to you on the 30th October and in accordance with the vow I have prayerfully taken on the Kali Pujah day, I shall commence my fast very soon. I shall send a formal intimation to Government in due course mentioning the exact date, but that will be on the very eve of commencement of the fast. I wrote on as far back as the 30th ultimo. Government have already had sufficient notice.

I shall be obliged if you treat this letter as confidential and kindly forward it to Government confidentially as early as possible.

Political Testament *

I am writing this in connection with my letter of the 30th October, 1940, addressed to the Hon'ble the Home Minister (copy of which was forwarded to the Chief Minister) and my confidential letters to the Superintendent, Presidency Jail, dated the 30th October and 14th November, which were forwarded to Government in due course. Herein I shall recapitulate what I have to say regarding my own case and shall also put down in black and white the considerations that are impelling me to take the most fateful step in my life.

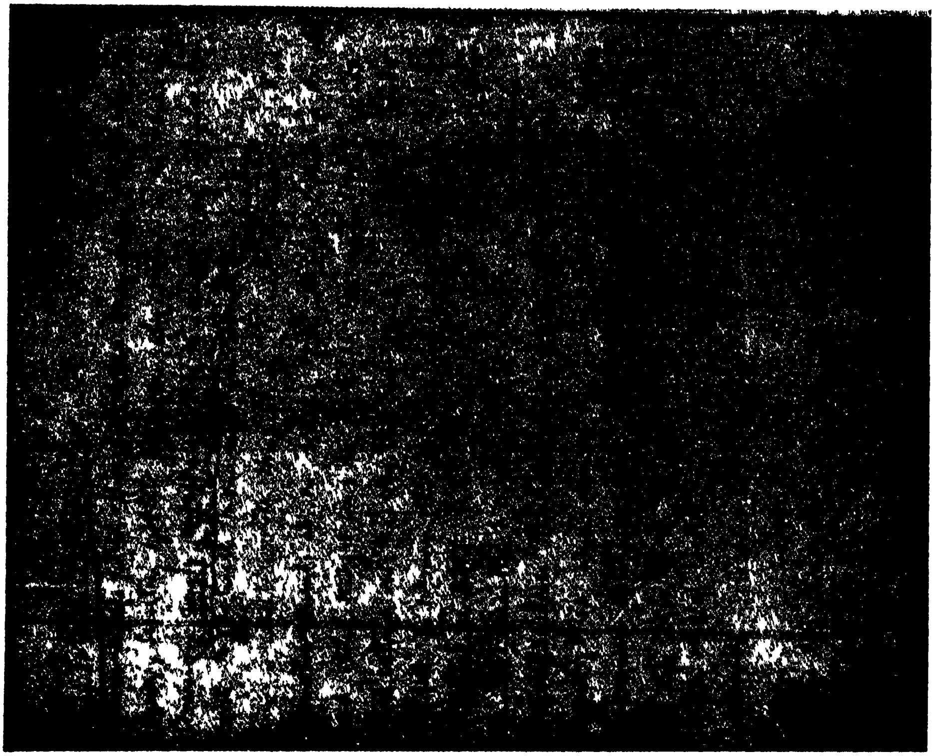
I have no longer any hope that I shall obtain redress at your hands. I shall, therefore, make but two requests—the second of which will be at the end of this letter. My first request is that this letter be carefully preserved in the archives of the Government, so that it may be available to those of my countrymen who will succeed you in office in future. It contains a message for my countrymen and is, therefore, my political testament.

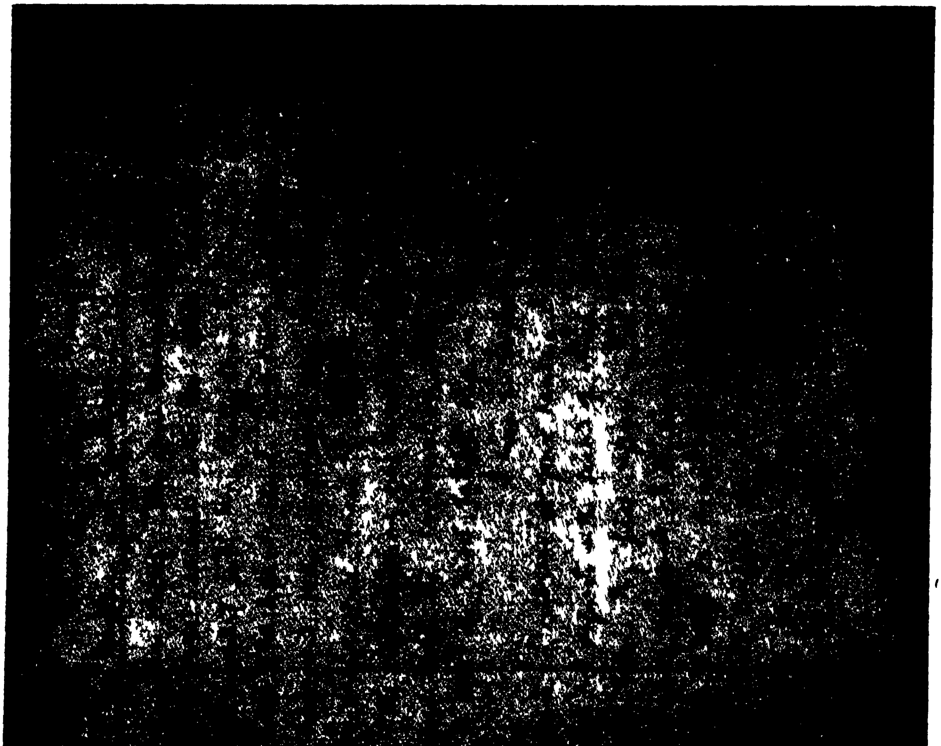
I was arrested without any official explanation or justification on the second July, 1940, and as per orders of the Government of Bengal, under

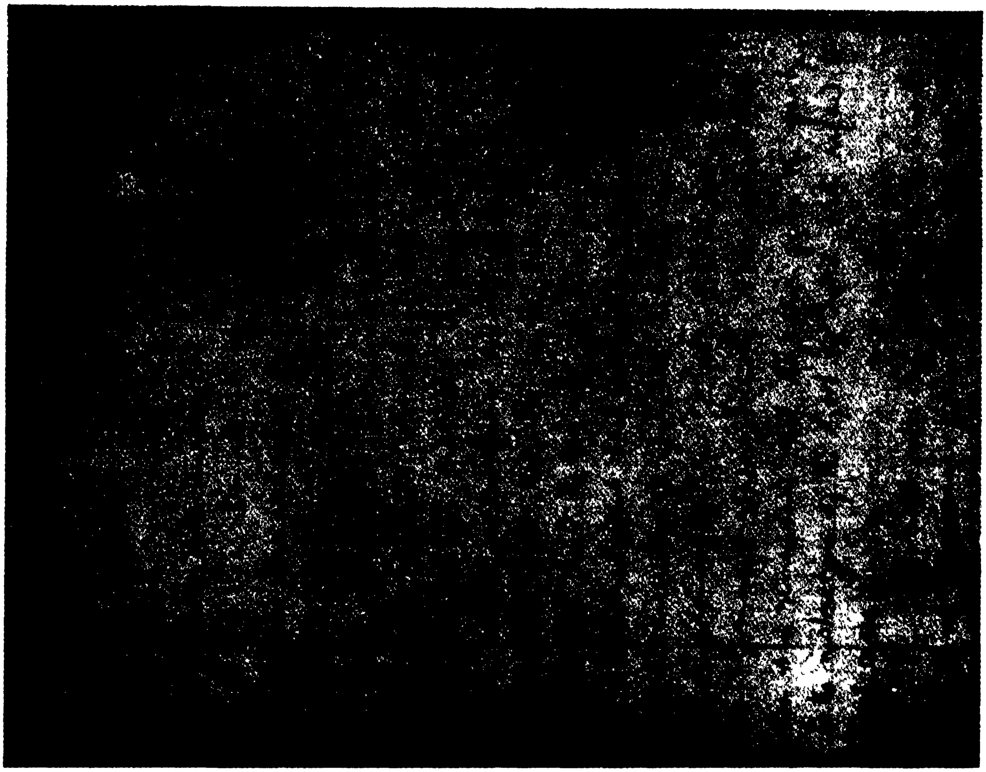
* This letter was addressed to His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers, on the 26th November, 1940.

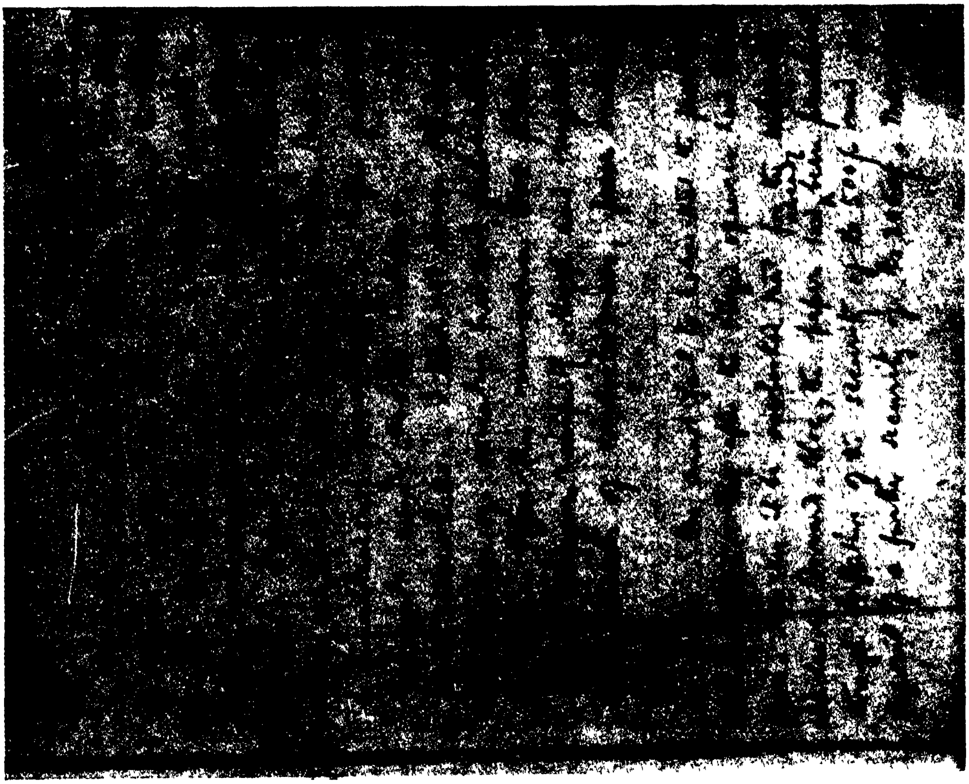
Facsimile of letter.
written by
Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose
to the
Governor of Bengal
on the
26th of November 1940,
from the
Presidency Jail.

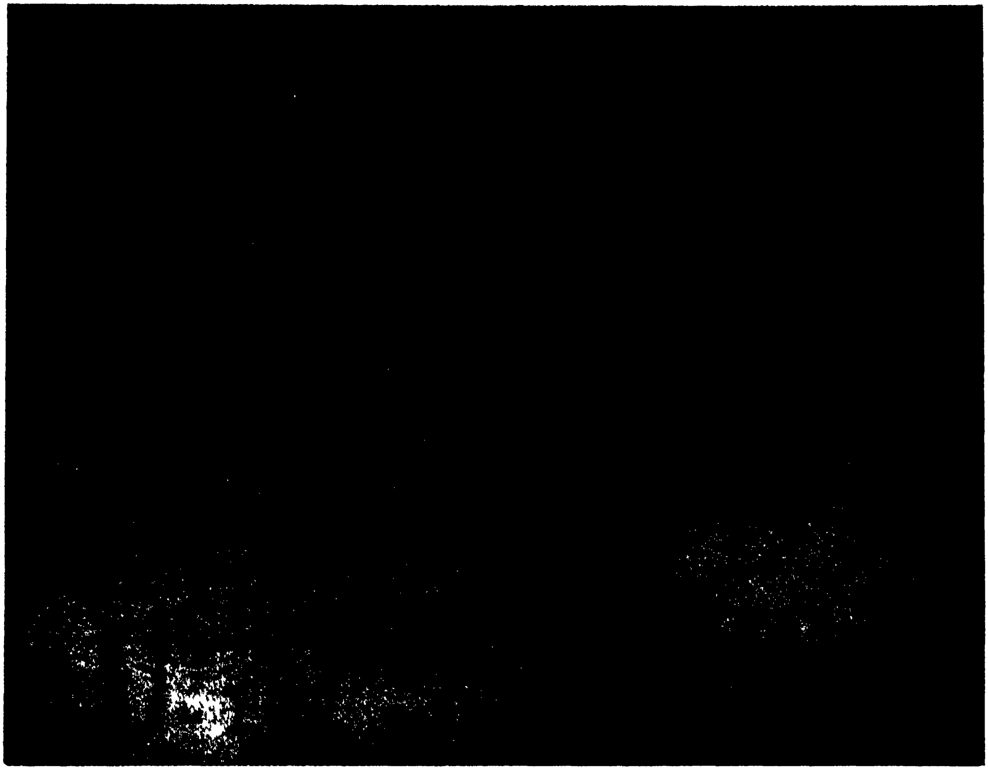
(For text of this letter See page 334)

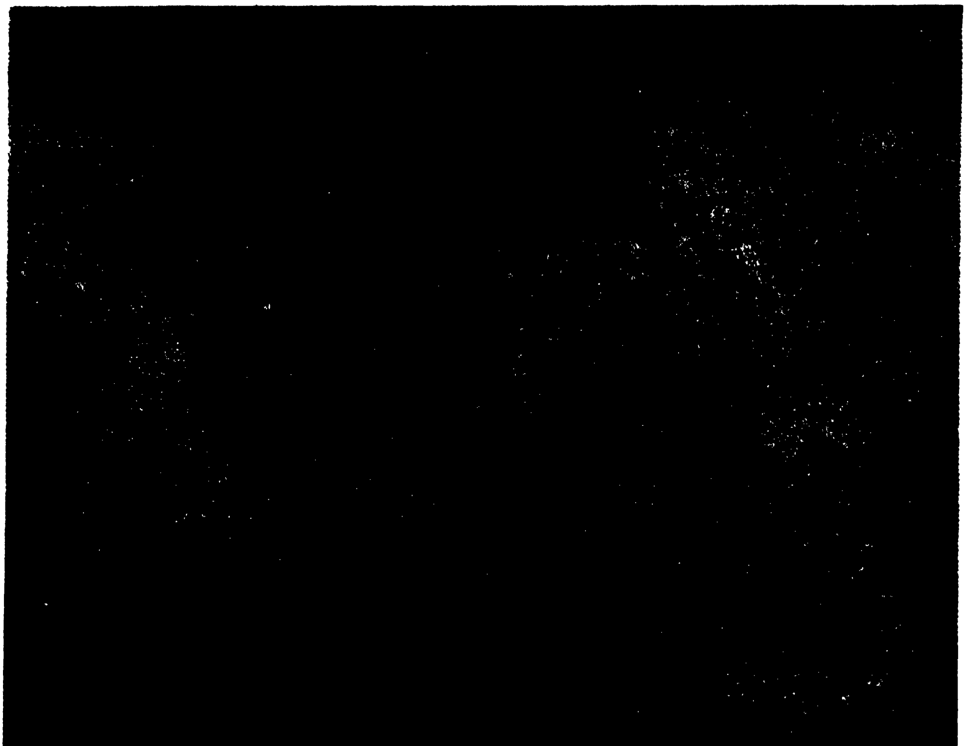


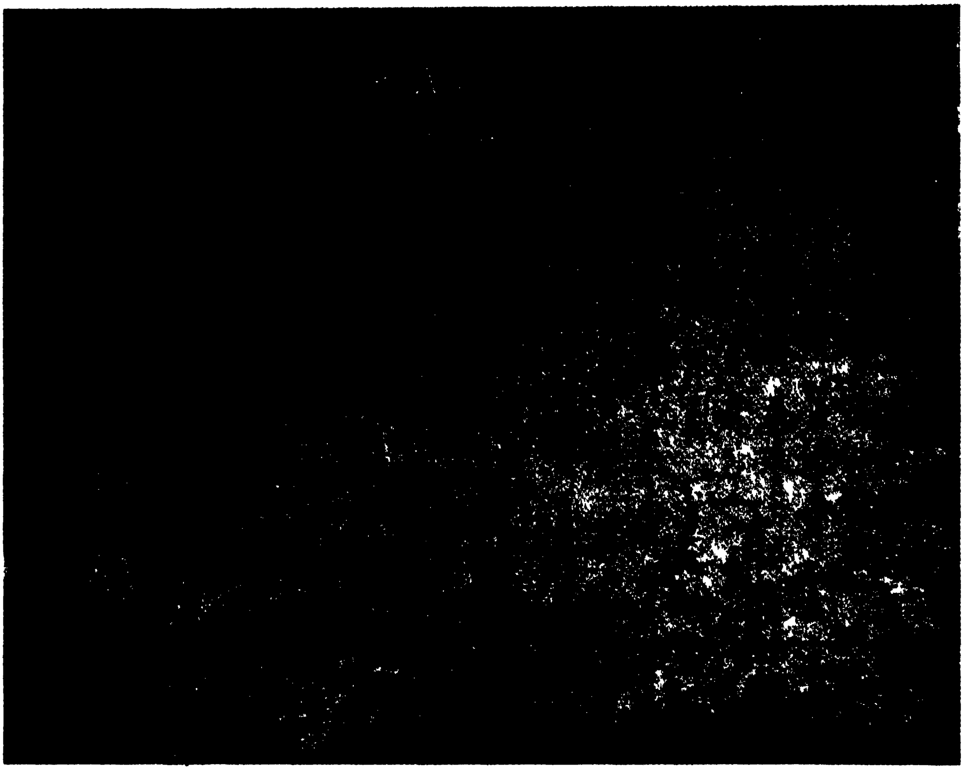














[illegible] being no bar [illegible] Government are obliged to administer [illegible]

[illegible] but enough has already been said above to show that the rules, even as they stand, have not been properly applied in my case. There has been manifest illegality and injustice. But one explanation can, to my mind, account for such a strange conduct viz. that Government have been pursuing a policy of vindictiveness for reasons that are quite inexplicable.

For more than two months the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over as to what I should do in such a predicament. [illegible] to the pressure of circumstances and [illegible] whatever comes my way — or should I protest against what to me is unfair, unjust and illegal. After mature deliberation I have come to [illegible] that surrender to [illegible] [illegible] It is a [illegible] [illegible] to perpetrate [illegible]

But all these long months a protest has been going on and the ordinary methods of protest have all been exhausted. Agitation in the press and on the platform, representations to Government, demands in the Assembly, exploration of legal channels — have not all of these been already tried and found ineffective? But one method remains — the last weapon in the hands of a prisoner — hunger strike or fast.

In the cold light of logic I have [illegible] the pros and cons of this step and have [illegible] weighed the loss and gain that will [illegible] it. I have no illusions [illegible] fully conscious that this [illegible] [illegible] will [illegible] for I am sufficiently conversant with the history of Government in such cases [illegible] [illegible] and immortal example of [illegible] and Jatin Das [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] life unto existing conditions [illegible] to purchase one's continued existence [illegible] with illegality and injustice [illegible] very frame. I would throw up life [illegible] rather than pay this price. Government are [illegible] to hold me in prison by brute force. I [illegible] reply: "Release me or I shall refuse to [illegible] it is for me to decide whether I choose [illegible] to die."

Through these immediate [illegible] no struggle [illegible] is ever futile. It is through suffering [illegible] alone that a cause can flourish [illegible] and in every age and clime the [illegible] proverb – "the blood of the martyrs [illegible] the church."

In this mortal world, everything [illegible] will perish – but [illegible] endured [illegible]

[illegible] to the next [illegible] will adapt through [illegible]

What greater solace can there be [illegible] the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the [illegible] that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message [illegible] be wafted over hills and dales (and over the broad plains) to every corner of his country and across the seas to other [illegible]? What higher consummation can life attain than [illegible] self-immolation at the altar of one's cause? Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the [illegible] earthy, he will gain much more in return by becoming [illegible] to a life immortal.

This is the technique of the soul. [illegible] individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die so that India may live [illegible] win freedom and glory.

To my countrymen I say [illegible] the greatest curse for a man is to [illegible]

Forget not ... [illegible]
... and ... then ... [illegible]
give life, if you want ... [illegible] ... that
... [illegible]
... [illegible]

To the Government ... I say
'Any hurt to your work done along the path of
Communalism ... [illegible]
will soon ... [illegible] ... to Jesus
... to retain your steps ... [illegible]
... [illegible]

I have finished ... my second and
last request to you ... [illegible]
interfere with my fast but should
permit me to approach my end peacefully. In the
... of Terence MacSwiney, of Jatin Das, of ...
... in one ... case in 1926 — Government
did decide not to interfere with the ...
fast. I hope they will do the same this time ...
... any attempt to feed me by force ...
... [illegible]

... more drastic and ... [illegible]
... I shall ... [illegible]

Yours faithfully

S.C.B.

... Nov 1940

P.S.

Again my previous fast, I shall take ... salt, ... But I may discontinue ... if I feel called upon to do so.

S.C.B.

Section 129 of the D. I. Rules. The first explanation subsequently emanating from the official sources came from the Rt. Hon. Amery, Secretary of State for India, who stated in the House of Commons quite categorically that the reason of the arrest was in connection with the movement for the Holwell Monument in Calcutta.

The Chief Minister virtually confirmed this pronouncement at a sitting of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and stated that it was the Holwell Monument Satyagraha which stood in the way of my release. When the Government decided to remove the Monument, all those who had been detained without trial in connection therewith were set free, with the exception of Mr. Narendra Narayan Chakravarti, M.L.A., and myself. These releases took place towards the end of August, 1940 and almost simultaneously an order for my permanent detention was served under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules, in lieu of the original order under Section 129 which provided for temporary detention.

Strangely enough, with the new order under Section 26, came the news that prosecution was being launched against me under Section 38 of the D. I. Rules before two Magistrates for three of my speeches and for a contributed article in the weekly journal, *Forward Bloc*, of which I had been the editor. Two of these speeches• had been delivered in February, 1940, and the third one early in April. Thus the Government created a unique and unprecedented situation towards the end of August last by detaining me permanently without trial under one Section of the Defence of India Rules and by simultaneously prosecuting me before judicial tribunal under another Section of the same Rules. I had not seen a similar combination of executive fiat and judicial procedure before this occurrence took place. Such a policy is manifestly illegal and unjust and smacks of vindictiveness, pure and simple.

One cannot fail to notice that the prosecution was launched long after the alleged offences had taken place. Nor can it be overlooked that for the relevant article in *Forward Bloc*, the paper had already been penalised through forfeiture of the security of Rs. 500 and deposit of a further security of Rs. 2,000. Moreover, the attack on the paper was made all of a sudden after a long period during which no warning had been given to the paper in accordance with the practice of the Government.

The attitude of the Bengal Government was further exposed when applications for my release on bail were made before the two trying Magistrates. Both these applications were stoutly opposed by the Government spokesmen. On the last occasion, one of the Magistrates, Mr. Wali-ul-

Islam, granted the bail application, but was constrained to remark that his order would remain infructuous till the Government withdrew their order for my detention without trial under Section 26 of the D. I. Rules. It is thus as clear as day-light that the Government have been pursuing a policy which fetters the discretion of judicial tribunals and interferes with the administration of law. The action of the Local Government appears all the more objectionable when it is remembered that they have given the go-by, to the instructions of the Government of India with regard to such cases.

Another interesting feature of the Government's policy is my simultaneous prosecution before two Magistrates. If the intention was to place more than one speech of mine before a court of law, that could very well have been fulfilled without resorting to two Magistrates, for I have delivered any number of speeches during the last twelve months within the limits of Calcutta proper. The man in the street is, therefore, forced to think that Government are so keen on seeing me convicted that they have provided for a second string to the legal bow.

Last, but not least, Government's action appears to an impartial man to be altogether malafide, because proceedings were instituted so long after the alleged prejudicial acts had been committed. If the acts in question were, in fact, prejudicial, then action should have been taken by Government long ago, *i.e.*, at the time that the alleged offences were committed.

May I request you to compare for one moment your attitude towards people like myself and towards Muslims arrested and imprisoned under the Defence of India Rules? How many cases have occurred up till now in which Muslims apprehended under the D. I. Rules have been suddenly released without rhyme or reason? The latest example of the Maulvi of Murapara is too fresh in public mind to need recounting. Are we to understand that under your rule there is one law for the Muslim and another for the Hindu and that the D. I. Rules have a different meaning when a Muslim is involved ? If so, the Government might as well make a pronouncement to that effect.

Let it be argued or suggested for one moment that for my incarceration, the Government of India, and not the Local Government, are responsible—I may remind you that in connection with an adjournment motion concerning myself tabled by Pandit L. K. Moitra, M.L.A. (Central) before the Indian Legislative Assembly only the other day—it was stated on behalf of the Government of India that the matter should not come before the Central Assembly, since I had been incarcerated by the Bengal

Government. I believe a similar admission was made in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Ministry.

And we cannot forget that here in Bengal we live under the benign protection of a "popular" ministry.

My recent election to the Indian Legislative Assembly has raised another issue—that of "immunity" from imprisonment for members of the Legislature while the Legislature is in session. This is a right inherent in every constitution, no matter whether it is explicitly provided in the statute or not, and this right has been established after a protracted struggle. Quite recently, the Burma Government allowed a convicted prisoner to attend the sittings of the Burma Legislative Assembly, but though I am not a convicted prisoner, I have been denied that right by our "popular" ministry.

If apologists attempt to invoke the precedent of Captain Ramsay, M. P. in support of the Government, I may point out that Captain Ramsay's case stands on a different footing altogether. Serious charges have been preferred against him, but all the facts not being known to us, it is difficult to argue either way. One may, however, urge that if Captain Ramsay has been unjustly imprisoned, and no redress will be ultimately forthcoming, it would lend substance to what Mr. Kennedy (American Ambassador to Great Britain) and others are reported to have said—namely, that democracy is dead in England. In any case, Capt. Ramsay has had the opportunity of getting his case examined by a Committee of the House of Commons.

In dealing with my case generally two broad issues have now to be considered. Firstly, have the Defence of India Rules any sanction, ethical or popular? Secondly, have the Rules, as they stand, been properly applied in my case? The answers to both the questions are in the negative.

The D. I. Rules have no ethical sanction behind them because they constitute an infringement of the elementary rights and liberties of the people. Moreover, they are essentially a war-measure and as is known to everybody, India was declared a belligerent power and was dragged into the war, without the consent of the Indian people or the Indian Legislature. Further, these rules militate against the claim so vociferously made in Britain that she is fighting the cause of freedom and democracy. And, lastly, the Congress Party in the Central Assembly was not a party to the adoption of the Defence of India Act or the Defence of India Rules. In these circumstances, it would not be improper to ask whether the Defence of India Rules should not more appropriately be called the Suppression of India Rules or the Defence of Injustice Rules.

It may be urged on behalf of this Government that the Defence of India Act being an Act of the Central Legislature, all provincial Governments are obliged to administer the Rules framed thereunder. But enough has already been said above to justify the charge that the Rules, even as they stand, have not been properly applied in my case. There has been manifest illegality and injustice. Only one explanation can, to my mind, account for such a strange conduct, *viz.*, that Government have been pursuing a frankly vindictive policy towards me for reasons that are quite inexplicable.

For more than two months, the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over again as to what I should do in such a predicament. Should I submit to the pressure of circumstances and accept whatever comes my way—or should I protest against what, to me, is unfair, unjust and illegal? After the most mature deliberation I have come to the conclusion that surrender to circumstances is out of the question. It is a more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong. So, protest I must.

But all these days, protest has been going on and the ordinary methods of protest have all been exhausted. Agitation in the press and on the platform, representations to Government, demands in the Assembly exploration of legal channels—have not all of these been already tried and found ineffective? Only one method remains—the last weapon in the hands of a prisoner—*i.e.*, hunger-strike or fast.

In the cold light of logic I have examined the *pros* and *cons* of this step and have carefully weighed the loss and gain that will accrue from it. I have no illusion in the matter and I am fully conscious that the immediate, tangible gain will be nil, for I am sufficiently conversant with the behaviour of Governments and bureaucracies during such crises. The classic and immortal examples of Terence Macswiney and Jatin Das are floating before my mind's eye at the moment. A system has no heart that could be moved, though it has a false sense of prestige to which it always clings.

Life under existing conditions is intolerable for me. To purchase one's continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself rather than pay this price. Government are determined to hold me in prison by brute force. I say in reply, "Release me or I shall refuse to live—and it is for me to decide whether I choose to live or to die."

Though there may be no immediate, tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever

futile. It is through suffering and sacrifice alone that a cause can flourish and prosper and in every age and clime the eternal law prevails—"the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church."

In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish—but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea—but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas, and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task ? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains, to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause ?

Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earthly, he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life immortal.

This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory.

To my countrymen I say—"Forget not that the greatest curse for a man is to remain a slave. Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong. Remember the eternal law—you must give life, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against inequity, no matter what the cost may be."

To the Government of the day I say—"Cry halt to your mad drive along the path of communalism and injustice. There is yet time to retrace your steps. Do not use a boomerang which will soon recoil on you. And do not make another Sind of Bengal."

I have finished. My second and last request to you is that you should not interfere forcibly with my fast but should permit me to approach my end peacefully. In the case of Terence Macswiney, of Jatin Das, of Mahatma Gandhi and in our own case in 1926—Government did decide not to interfere with the fast. I hope they will do the same this time—otherwise any attempt to feed me by force will be resisted with all my strength—though the consequences thereof may be even more drastic and

disastrous than otherwise. I shall commence my fast on the 29th November, 1940.

P. S.—As in my previous fasts, I shall take only water with salt. But I may discontinue this later on, if I feel called upon to do so.

*Fifth Letter**

1. This is my final appeal to you.

2. I have already written to Government requesting them not to resort forcible feeding and informing them that if this is, nevertheless, attempted, I shall have to resist it with all my strength, though the consequences thereof may be "more drastic and disastrous than otherwise." In my confidential letter to the Superintendent, Presidency Jail, dated the 30th October last and in my letter to Government dated the 26th November, I made my position perfectly clear. I was, therefore, surprised when I got hints from the jail authorities that forcible feeding was still being contemplated in my case.

3. I shall not repeat all the arguments urged by me on this subject in the above two letters, but I desire to briefly recapitulate my position once again.

4. Firstly, Government have no moral right to feed me forcibly when they are responsible for making my life intolerable through injustice and illegality, strongly tinged with communalism.

5. Government have no legal authority either to forcibly feed me in these circumstances. There is no law that I know of, which empowers Government to use force in this manner. A departmental order of Government cannot take place of law, particularly when it infringes the elementary rights and liberties of the individual.

6. If any attempt is made to forcibly feed me in spite of my repeated requests to the contrary, all those directly or indirectly responsible for it will become civilly and criminally liable for any injury or pain bodily or mental, that may be inflicted on me thereby.

7. Apart from the above points of principle, my physical condition both before and after the commencement of the fast should render it impossible for forcible feeding to be attempted in my case. It should be quite clear that under such circumstances, forcible feeding will defeat its own purpose and instead of prolonging life will haste its end. Civil and crimi-

* This letter was addressed to the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers on the 5th December, 1940.

nal liability for the use of force will, owing to this consideration, be naturally aggravated.

8. I may inform you in this connection that in the event of forcible feeding being resorted to, I shall have no option but to take steps to relieve myself of the unbearable, protracted agony resulting from it. This could be done only by suicide and the responsibility for it will rest entirely with the Government. For a man who has turned his back on life there are a hundred ways of reaching his end and no power on earth can prevent his death. I have chosen the most peaceful method and it would be sheer brutality to force me to adopt a less peaceful or more drastic remedy. The step that I have now taken is not an ordinary fast. It is the result of several months' mature deliberation finally sealed by a vow prayerfully taken by me on the sacred day of Kali Pujah.

9. I have been on hunger-strike several times before, but this fast is of an unusual type, never resorted to by me previously.

10. Man does not live by bread alone. He needs moral and spiritual sustenance as well. When he is denied the latter, you cannot expect him to live, merely to further your plans or fit in with your scheme of things.

11. I have already said in my letter of the 26th November that I have but two requests to make of you—firstly, that my letter of the 26th November, which is my political testament, be carefully preserved in the archives of the Government and, secondly, that I be allowed to approach my end peacefully. Is that asking too much of you?"

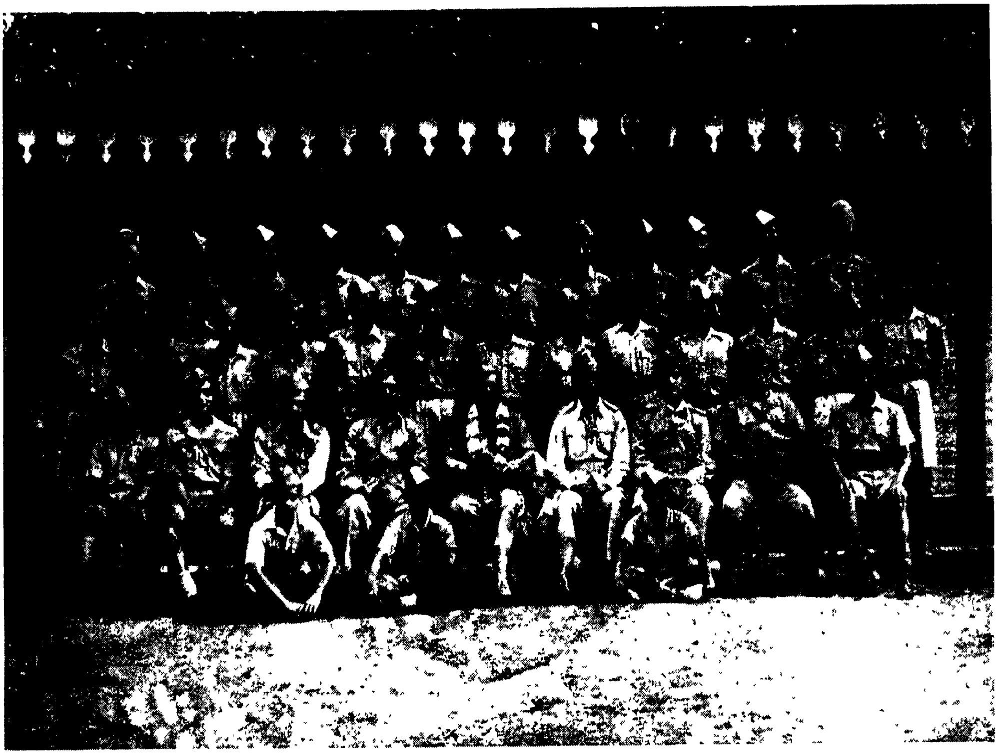
AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATION

" After their first defeat at the hands of the British, in 1757, in Bengal, the Indian people fought an uninterrupted series of hard and bitter battles over a stretch of one hundred years. The history of this period turns with examples of unparalleled heroism and self-sacrifice. And in the pages of that history the names of Sirajuddoula and Mohanlal of Bengal, Haider Ali, Tippu Sultan and Velu Tampi of South India, Appa Sahib Bhonsle and Peshwa Baji Rao of Maharashtra, the Begums of Oudh, Sardar Shyam Singh Atariwala, of the Punjab and last, but not least, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Maharaja Kunwar Singh of Dumraon and Nana Saheb —among others—the names of all these warriors are for ever engraved in letters of gold.

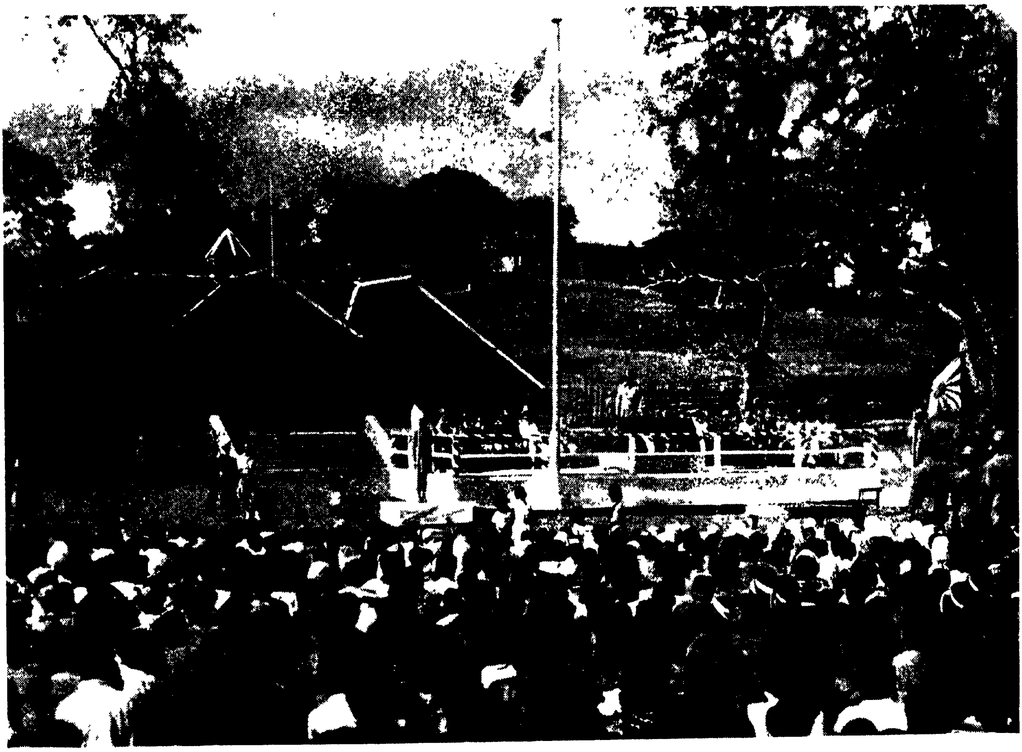
" Unfortunately for us, our forefathers did not at first realise that the British constituted a grave threat to the whole of India, and they did not, therefore, put up a united front against the enemy. Ultimately when the Indian people were roused to the reality of the situation, they made a concerted move and under the flag of Bahadur Shah in 1857, they fought their last war as "free men." In spite of a series of brilliant victories in the early stages of this war, ill-luck and faulty leadership gradually brought about their final collapse and subjugation. Nevertheless, such heroes as the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Kunwar Singh and Nana Saheb live like eternal stars in the nation's memory to inspire us to greater deeds of sacrifice and valour.

" Forcibly disarmed by the British after 1857 and subjected to terror and brutality, the Indian people lay prostrate for a while but with the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885, there came a new awakening. From 1885 till the end of the last World War, the Indian people in their endeavour to recover their lost liberty, tried all possible methods, namely, agitations, propaganda, boycott of 'British goods', terrorism and sabotage and finally armed revolution. But all these efforts failed for a time. Ultimately, in 1920, when the Indian people, haunted by a sense of failure, were groping for a new method, Mahatma Gandhi came forward with a new weapon of 'non-co-operation and civil disobedience.'

" For two decades thereafter, the Indian people went through a phase of intense patriotic activity. The message of freedom was carried to every Indian home. Through personal example, people were taught to suffer,



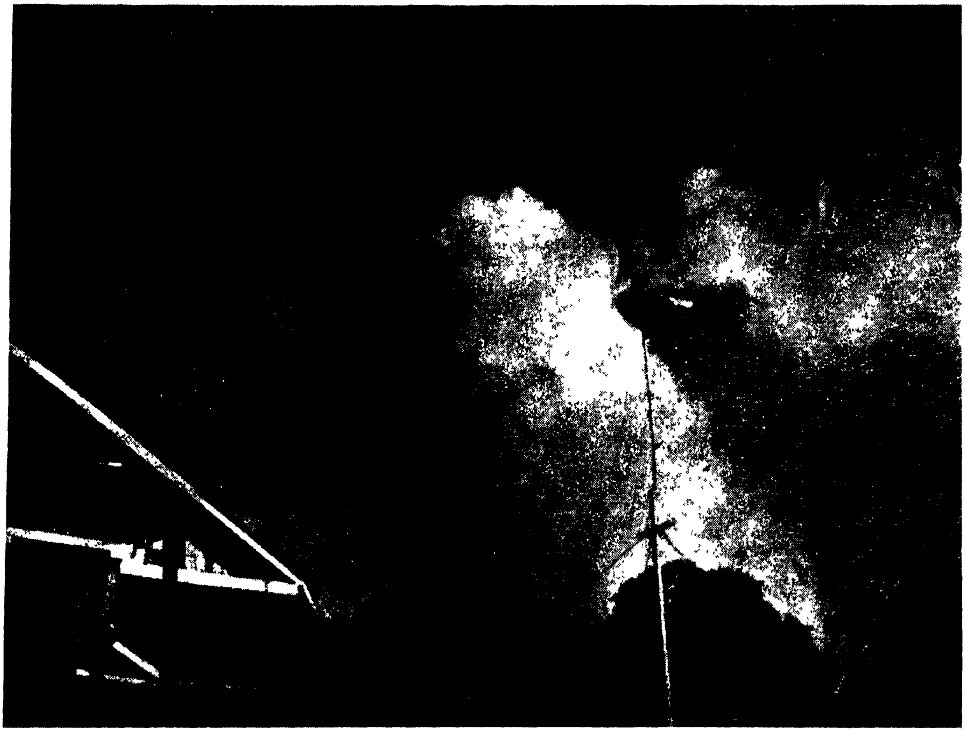
Col. Loganadhan and other officers of the Azad Hind Forces with the boys under training



athering in



Young cadets at parade



National Flag hoisted in the border of Manipur

to sacrifice and to die in the cause of Freedom. From the centre to the remotest villages, the people were knit together into one political organisation. Thus Indian people not only recovered their political consciousness, but became a political entity once again. They could now speak with one voice and strive with one will for one common goal. From 1936 to 1939, through the work of the Congress Ministers in eight provinces, they gave proof of their readiness and capacity to administer their own affairs.

" Thus on the eve of the present World War, the stage was set for the final struggle for India's liberation. During the course of this war, Germany with the help of her allies has dealt shattering blows to our enemy in Europe while Nippon with the help of her allies has inflicted a knock-out blow to our enemy in East Asia. Followed by a most happy combination of circumstances, the Indian people to-day have a wonderful opportunity for achieving their national emancipation. For the first time in recent history, Indians abroad have also been politically roused and united in one organisation. They are not only thinking and feeling in the tune of their countrymen at home but are also marching in step with them along the path to freedom. In East Asia, in particular, over two million Indians are now organised as one solid phalanx, inspired by the slogan of total mobilisation. And in front of them stand the serried ranks of India's Army of Liberation, with the slogan ' Onward to Delhi ' on their lips.

" Having goaded Indians to desperation by its hypocrisy and having driven them to starvation and death by plunder and loot, British rule in India has forfeited the good-will of the Indian people altogether and is living a precarious existence. It needs but a flame to destroy the last vestige of that unhappy rule. To light that flame is the task of India's Army of Liberation. Assured of the enthusiastic support of the civil population at home and also of a large section of Britain's Indian Army and backed by a gallant and invincible allies abroad; but relying in the first instance on its own strength India's Army of Liberation is confident of fulfilling its historic role.

"Now that the dawn of Freedom is ahead, it is the duty of the Indian people to set up a provisional Government of their own and launch a last struggle under the banner of that Government. But with all the Indian leaders in prison, the people at home, totally disarmed, it is not possible to set up a provisional Government within India or to launch an armed struggle under the aegis of that Government. It is, therefore, the duty of the Indian Independence League in East Asia, supported by all patriotic Indians at home and abroad to undertake this task—the task of setting

up a provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) and of conducting the last fight for freedom with the help of the Army of Liberation (that is, the Azad Hind Fauz or the Indian National Army) organised by the League.

" Having been constituted as the provisional Government of Azad Hind by the Indian Independence League in East Asia, we enter upon our duties with a full sense of the responsibility that has developed upon us. We pray that Providence may bless our work and our struggle for the emancipation of our motherland. And we hereby pledge our life and the lives of our comrades-at-arms to the cause of her freedom and of her welfare, and stand among the nations of the world.

" It will be the task of the provisional Government to launch upon and to conduct the struggle that will bring about the expulsion of the British and of their Allies from the soil of India. It will be then the task of the provisional Government to bring about the establishment of a permanent National Government of Azad Hind constituted in accordance with the will of the Indian people and enjoying their confidence. After the British and their Allies are thrown out and until a permanent National Government of Azad Hind is established it will administer the affairs of the country in the interest of the Indian people.

"The provisional Government is entitled to and hereby claims allegiance of every Indian. It guarantees religious liberty as well as equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens. It declares its firm resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, treating all the children of the nation equally and transcending all the differences cunningly fostered by an alien Government in the part.

" In the name of God, in the name of bygone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice,—we call upon the Indian people to rally round one banner and to strike for India's freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and all their Allies in India and to prosecute that struggle with valour and perseverance and with full faith in final Victory until the enemy is expelled from India's soil and the Indian people are once again a Free Nation."

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind.

(1) Subhas Chandra Bose, Head of the State, Prime Minister and Minister for War, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army.

(2) Capt. Miss Lakshmi (Women's Organisation.)
(3) S. A. Ayer (Publicity and Propaganda.)
(4) Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterjee (Finance.)
(5) Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed.
(6) Lt.-Col. N. S. Bhagat.
(7) Lt.-Col. J. K. Bhonsle.
(8) Lt.-Col. Gulzara Singh.
(9) Lt.-Col. M. Z. Kiani.
(10) Lt.-Col. A. D. Longnadhan.
(11) Lt.-Col. A. D. Rao.
(12) Lt.-Col. Ehsan Qadir.
(13) Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz.
(4-13) Representatives of the Armed Forces.
(14) A. M. Sahay, Secretary with Ministerial Rank.
(15) Rash Behari Bose, Supreme Adviser.

Advisers :

(16) Karim Ghani.
(17) Deb Nath Das.
(18) D. M. Khan.
(19) A. Yellappa.
(20) I. Thivy.
(21) Sardar Ishwar Singh.
(22) A. N. Sarkar (Legal Adviser.)

SYONAN, October 21, 1943.

STRAY THOUGHTS ON NETAJI SUBHAS BOSE

BY BRAHMACHARI KAILASAM

(An intimate associate of Netaji Bose, was Principal of the Indian National School, Singapore, and Member i/c Education and Culture, I. I. L., Singapore.)

"What others cannot the Great achieve" says a maxim of the Tirukkural. Subhas Babu has become Great and the Netaji because his achievements are unparalleled in the history of Indian struggle for Freedom. What his colleagues, the fighters for Indian freedom, whether passive or aggressive, could not accomplish during their long years of struggle Netaji Bose accomplished in a couple of years.

*   *   *   *

Nobody can today gainsay that the Indian Freedom Fight initiated and organised by Netaji Bose in East Asia has tremendously accelerated India's march to freedom, and it has generated a new force in the country.

*   *   *   *

The formation of the Indian National Army and the mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy Ratings in consequence of the historic I.N.A. trials have convinced the task-masters and rulers of India that no more can they trust their mercenary armies for holding India down in subjugation.

*   *   *   *

Through the I. N. A. and the Provisional Government of Free India Netaji has practically demonstrated for all times to come that the different races and the different religionists of India can unite together, work together, live together and die together, if necessary, under one flag as brothers.

*   *   *   *

At the clarion call of Netaji, in East Asia the young and the old, men, women and children, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, welded themselves together under one banner and sacrificed and worked together as "Hindustanis" for the cause of their motherland.

*   *   *   *

The I. N. A. and the Provisional Government of Free India have

proved before our eyes that Indians, without being tied down to the apron-strings of others, can and are capable of administering effectively and efficiently their own affairs, whether military or civil.

* * * *

The I.N.A. was a truly revolutionary army inasmuch as its leader Netaji was a born revolutionary. It was not at all a mercenary army. It was trained and commanded by Indian Officers. All cautions were in Hindustani. In spite of their lacking full equipments and sufficient amenities the personnel of the I.N.A. dared to march to Delhi. No sacrifice was too great for them for they felt they were working and fighting for a cause, a noble cause, a cause which was their own.

* * * *

The National consciousness of the different peoples in South-East Asia received a great impetus from the magnetic personality of Netaji Bose and his activities in those regions. All the political and national leaders of today in the South-East Asian countries have drawn their inspiration from Netaji.

* * * *

Netaji wanted a United Asia. The Great East Asian Conference held at Tokyo during the war period was directly due to his suggestion.

* * * *

It would be the highest folly to say that Netaji Bose was a Fascist. Samyavada (equalism) was his creed. He felt that if Imperialism can ally itself with Communism for utilitarian purposes, why not a slave-nation accept aid from wherever it came for the same utilitarian purposes ?

* * * *

He was ready to fight the Japanese if they ever dared to lord it over India or Indians, just as he fought the British.

* * * *

The unrelenting, tenacious and autocratic Japanese military-men invariably gave way to Netaji's dominant will.

A proud Mayor of Syonan was once forced to climb the stairs of Netaji's bungalow and beg pardon from him for a wrong step he (the Mayor) had taken in wilfully forming a certain Association for Indians without the prior consent of Netaji. The Association in question was subsequently dissolved by an order of the day from Netaji.

* * * *

A Suka (spiritual and moral purity and fervour), a Chanakya (knowledge of state-craft), an Arjuna (warriorhood) and an Akbar (unity

of religious creeds) were all blended harmoniously in the personality of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

* * * *

'Happy is he born and taught who serveth not another's will' find literal fulfilment in Netaji Subhas.

* * * *

His power of transforming human beings and infusing a new vigorous spirit into them is remarkable. His words and personality carry tremendous power in them. Out of the weak 'rubber-tapers' (in the words of Winston Churchill) he produced the 'heroes' who dared to actually fight the so-called superior white-men, with a measure of success, at the Imphal and Arakan fronts.

* * * *

He gave a lie to the modern theory that certain classes or communities of Indians alone can be called the 'Martial races'. He has shown that the docile South Indian is as much a good and tough soldier as any North Indian.

* * * *

Without first finding out mass opinion and popular feelings Netaji never took any step in any direction.

* * * *

A born optimist was he in the real sense of the term. Defeats and setbacks never, never discouraged or deterred him. He always maintained his hope in ultimate success for a righteous cause. "We will win and India shall be free" he wrote immediately after the retreat from Burma.

* * * *

'Live for an Idea' he once autographed. His whole life, nay every moment of his life has been a pulsation of "Jai Hind"—which he has bequeathed to the nation.

* * * *

In Netaji one finds a combination of an Idealist and a Realist. It is his sense of practicality that has drawn the youths and the masses towards him.

* * * *

Consideration for others and sharing the difficulties and tribulations of his followers, like a true leader as he was, were his cardinal qualities. Even while he himself was in the midst of suffering or danger, he was solicitious about the welfare and safety of others.

* * * *

He would not take for himself a pinch of ration in excess of what had been allotted to his men.

* * * *

He knew how to love. He captured others by his love.

* * * *

Netaji Bose never lived or did anything for himself. His life and his actions were in the best interest of others and his country. Above all, he never believed in intrigues.

* * * *

He was a staunch believer in Divine guidance. The Gita verse 'He who makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple to cross the mountains' was ever on Netaji's lips. He was a worshipper of the Universal Power (Sakti).

AN OPPONENT'S TRIBUTE

BY S. K. D. PALIWAL

(Leader of the Congress Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party)

I most eagerly grasp this opportunity of paying my heartfelt tribute to the historic sacrifice of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Mine was a case of oppositional devotion (विरोध-भक्ति) with regard to his politics and leadership.

When in May, 1933, Subhas Babu issued a statement that Gandhism was dead, I had to perform the unpleasant duty of contradicting him by a counter-statement. I said, "Gandhism is not dead. It is born to conquer."

Again in 1939, when Subhas Babu was elected president of the Indian National Congress in spite of Mahatmaji's support to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaiyya I tabled a no-confidence motion against him along with my friends Babu Mohan Lal Saxena and Sjt. Satya Narain Singh. But, in spite of these strong differences, I always had highest admiration for his fighting spirit.

I regarded him even then as a born leader of men with unique organising capacities. I was in full agreement with him in the stand he took against British Imperialism and was in favour of starting the struggle for freedom in 1939. When he visited Agra in that year "the Sainik" made my position quite clear that though I was opposed to Subhas Babu in his quarrel against the Congress High Command, I was ready to go the whole hog with him in his fight against British Imperialism.

The news of Subhás Babu's disappearance from his home residence was received by me in the Naini Central Jail, where I had the good fortune of living in the same barrack with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The idea at once flashed in my mind that Subhas Babu was going to stake his all in utilising the World War II to free our mother country from the stranglehold of Britishers. I openly said that if he did so, he would make himself an immortal hero in the history of India's fight for freedom. And fortunately for our country my guess only turned out to be too true. And today Subhas Babu is the immortal hero of the War of Indian Independence. The Provisional Independent Nationalist Government and the I.N.A.



Artist Khagen Roy

The first glimpse of the Fatherland Azad Hind Soldiers in Manipur

Prabasi Press Calcutta

have been the last nails in the coffin of the British Imperialism in India. Subhas Babu's deeds have captured the imagination of our people as nothing else has done. They have inspired self-respect and self-confidence in our people and have given undying confidence in our capacity to free ourselves. The awakening brought about and the enthusiasm generated by the services of the I.N.A. and the Red Fort trials have been most potent factors in compelling the British Government to come to terms with the Indian National Congress in spite of the obstinate unwillingness of British Tories and Indian Bureaucrats against such a course.

I still believe in what I said in September, 1945, just after my release that dead or alive Subhas Babu has made himself immortal. He will live so long as a single patriotic Indian lives and also so long as the golden pages of the History of India's fight for freedom survive. Today undoubtedly he has a mass appeal not only greater than that of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru but also than that of Mahatma Gandhi.

At this juncture when India is on the threshold of her independence and hopes to lead Asia, and through Asia the whole world towards freedom from slavery and exploitation of all mankind, I have no doubt in my mind that the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose is the unique combination of all the best and the most essential qualities of leadership. To my mind these three great leaders amongst them constitute the trinity—Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh of the modern universe.

It can truly be said of me as regards my relationship with Subhas Babu that I came to oppose but I remain to admire and follow him.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA

Famine is now playing a terrific havoc on the people of India, and a kindly Government, according to a British news report, is taking measures in big cities like Calcutta for the quick removal of corpses from the streets. We suppose our countrymen are expected to be grateful to the British Raj for this praiseworthy concern in the disposal of the dead and the dying

Strange to say, however, our people, far from being grateful to the Government, are blaming the British Government for the mounting mortality resulting from acute famine conditions throughout the land. The charge is, that these appalling conditions have been brought about entirely by the Government's policy of diverting a good part of India's foodstuffs, to feed the British and the American armies of occupation in India and the Middle East, and their famishing allies and satellites in Russia, Iran, Iraque etc. And, by this deliberate policy, the British are starving the Indians to death.

The Food Department of the British Government in India has come out at last with a limp denial of the charge. It says that only 5 lac tons of wheat and 1,44,000 tons of rice are required annually for the consumption of the military forces, and these figures represent only a fraction of what India produces.

Assume for a moment, that the Government appropriates to its Military forces no more of our foodstuffs than 5 lac tons of wheat and 1,44,000 tons of rice, where on earth is any justification for this appropriation, when the very children of India's soil, are starving to death in their thousands ? It is because Britain and America are fighting this war to keep Asia under their heel for all time, that we Indians must fatten their troops in India and the Middle East, even by letting millions of our people die of starvation. The British Raj has clamped into jail 3 lacs of India's patriots including Mahatma Gandhi. Has it therefore established a devine right to famish our unhappy countrymen ?

The British Government itself has said that India's total grain production is round about 50 million tons, while India's grain requirements amount to 52 million tons. On the British Government's own showing, India suffers from a shortage of 2 million tons. Instead of finding ways and means to make good this shortage, an inhuman Government has aggravated our plight by plundering what we already have.



Famine (*By* D. P. Roy Choudhury)



The Food Department has disclosed the figures in respect of wheat and supplies to their Military forces. But it has not yet disclosed what enormous quantities of foodstuffs have been sent to Russia and the other allies and satellites, to the detriment of the Indian consumer. Francis Joseph, Chairman of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation, speaking in London two months ago, described the mobilisation of India's Industries, agriculture and mining resources to meet the vast and pressing needs of Russia and the Middle countries. In the course of his speech, he revealed that prompt shipment of Indian wheat spared Iran the rigours of famine in the Spring and early Summer of 1941. Iran received from India not only wheat but many other foodstuffs, such as sugar and tea. Syria and Palestine are other Middle East countries which have drawn on India for food supply, according to Francis Joseph. The same gentleman tells us that Russia has also benefited on a large scale at India's expense.

In the name of justice what right has Britain to Santa Claus to the world with India's produce, especially when that produce is hardly enough for Indians themselves ? Even before this war, India was an extremely poor country. As a Government Report published in 1930 says, "A large proportion of the inhabitants in India, are still beset with poverty of a kind which finds no parallel in Western lands, and are living on the very margin of subsistence". Sir Alfred Chatterton, writing to the Journal of the East India Association in July, 1931, stated that, between 30 and 40 millions of the population do not have more than one meal a day and live on the verge of perpetual starvation.

Now, what is the cause of this wretchedness in normal times, which in this war-time is doubly more wretched ? India is a country of poor people. But it is not a poor country. Not only are the natural resources of India exceptionally favourable for the highest degree of prosperity for the population through combined agricultural and industrial development, but it is also the case that, prior to British Rule, Indian economic development stood well to forefront in the world's scale.

But the British came to our land as a blight. Through their policy or systematic neglect of our agriculture and discouragement of our industries, India is today groaning in misery, and our people are dying in the streets like flies. The longer the British retain their stranglehold on unhappy India, the more intense will become the agony of our people. At this very moment, the British are using the deadly weapon of starvation to beat Indians into surrender.

It is the present circumstances so many Indians have to die anyhow,

is it not a thousand times better to die fighting the foe, than die as a victim of starvation ? By dying for the liberation of our long suffering country, every true Indian will make himself immortal.

"Young India"—an English Weekly of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose,
29th August, 1943.

* * * *

Unity Faith Sacrifice

AZAD HIND

Organ of the Indian Independence League H. Q.

Vol. 2 No. 149 TUESDAY, JUNE 26, (1945) 2605, Syowa 20 7 Cents

RIGHTEOUS CAUSE IS BOUND TO PREVAIL IN THE LONG RUN, EXHORTS NETAJI BOSE TO FELLOW-REVOLUTIONARIES AT HOME IN A BROADCAST ADDRESS DIRECTED TO INDIA.

"I am confident that if we fight on and if we play our cards well in the international field, we shall win our freedom by the end of this war. But that does not mean that if, by any chance, we fail to do so, we should be disheartened or depressed. Consequently, if the worst happens and India does not emerge as an independent State by the end of this war, our next plan shall be a post-war revolution inside India."

Thus stated Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Head of the Provisional Government of *Azad Hind,* and Supreme Commander of the *Azad Hind Fouz,* in a broadcast to his fellow-revolutionaries inside India last night.

Comrades, to-day I am addressing you as a revolutionary speaking to fellow-revolutionaries, as I would have done, if I had been in your midst. India is now facing a political crisis and if a wrong step is taken we might suffer a set-back in our march towards independence. I cannot tell you how worried I feel to-day because, on the one hand, Independence is within sight—while, on the other hand, if a wrong step is taken, that independence may recede into the distance.

At the outset, let me tell you that enemy propaganda in India has been so successful that influential sections of our countrymen, who, only three years ago, were convinced that independence was within their grasp, and who were determined to "Do or Die" in order to win that independence, are now thinking in terms of Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council. We who are outside India at this critical juncture, can take a much more objective view of the entire world-situation than many of our countrymen at home. It is, therefore, our duty to tell you frankly what we think, and to advise you accordingly.

READY TO MEET OFFENSIVE

After we withdrew our Headquarters from Rangoon, it was open to us to move to another place inside Burma—just as the Government of Independent Burma did—on the ground, that our troops were still fighting inside Burma. But we instinctively felt that the enemy would immediately exploit his recent military successes in Europe and in Burma, and launch a new political and military offensive. Consequently, we should be ready to meet that offensive and we should be at a place from where we could speak to India, if necessary. That is the principal reason why I am in Syonan today.

The crisis that faces India today has arisen because some influential sections among our countrymen, who, only three years ago, were shouting Liberty or Death, are now prepared to enter into a compromise with the British Government on Lord Wavell's own terms. This attitude is entirely mistaken and unjustified for two reasons. Firstly, there can be no compromise on the question of Independence. Secondly, the situation is not what these countrymen of ours think, and if we continue our resistance to British Imperialism, we shall win our independence by the end of this war.

If among those who are listening to me now there is anyone who has any doubt as to whether I am in close touch with what is happening all over the world, he can himself judge from one simple fact. He must have noticed from my daily talks during the last week that I am in intimate touch with the daily developments inside India. And if I am in touch with the daily developments at home, I can easily be in touch with what is happening all over the world. On the other hand, for those who are inside India and who cannot see what is happening in that part of the world that is not dominated by the Anglo-Americans, and who are victims of skilful enemy propaganda, it is difficult to form an objective opinion of the entire world situation. To-day, the whole world is in the melting pot and India's destiny is bound up, to some extent, with what is happening all over the world.

OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK

Now, why am I so optimistic at a time when some of our prominent leaders have developed such a defeatist mentality? It is because of two principal reasons. Firstly, we are carrying on an armed struggle against the British and their allies, and we are not pessimistic about the situation in East Asia, in spite of our recent reverses in Burma.

Secondly, India has become an international issue, and if that issue

is not converted into a domestic issue of the British Empire, India's case will come up before the bar of world opinion. Can't you see with your own eyes or hear with your own ears how Syria and Lebanon are exploiting the world situation to their advantage by creating a split within the camp of the so-called Allied Nations ? We are not less intelligent or less far-sighted than the leaders of Syria and Lebanon. But if we want to bring the Indian issue before the bar of world opinion, we have to do two things.

Firstly, we have to prevent any compromise with British Imperialism. Secondly, we have to assert India's right to freedom with arms. If our countrymen at home cannot take up arms or they cannot continue even Civil Disobedience against Britain's war effort, let them at least keep up the moral resistance to British Imperialism and refuse to come to any compromise. We shall continue to assert India's right to freedom with arms, and so long as we do so, no power on earth can prevent India remaining an international issue, privided you do not let us down by compromising with the British Government.

I understand that some of the leaders at home are furious with me for opposing their plans for a compromise with the British Government. They are also furious with me for pointing out that the Congress Working Committee has constitutionally no right to take such a fateful decision behind the back of the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress. And they are furious with me for pointing out that the Congress Working Committee does not represent Left Wing opinion in the Congress and in the country. These infuriated leaders are abusing me for taking the help of the Nipponese.

I am not ashamed of taking the help of Nippon, by co-operation with Nippon on this basis. Nippon recognises India's complete independence and has granted formal recognition to the Provisional Government of *Azad Hind* or Free India. But those who now want to co-operate with the British Government, and fight Britain's imperialist war, are prepared to accept the position of subordinates responsible to Britain's Viceroy in India. If they were to co-operate with the British Government on the basis that Britain grants formal recognition to a Government of Free India, that would be a different matter.

NIPPON AID TO FORM I.N.A.

Moreover, Nippon has given us the arms with which to organise an army, which is Indian from top to bottom. This Army, the *Azad Hind Fauz*, has been trained by Indian instructors, using the Indian language.

This Army carries India's National Flag and its slogans are India's national slogans. This Army has its own Indian officers and its own Officers' Training Schools, run entirely by Indians. And, in the field of battle, this army fights under its own Indian Commanders, some of whom have now reached the rank of Generals. If one talks of a puppet army, then it is the British Indian Army that should be called a puppet army, because it is fighting Britain's imperialist war under British officers.

Am I to believe that in an army of two-and-a-half millions, in which so many Indians are found fit to obtain the highest honour in the British Army—namely, the Victoria Cross—not one single Indian could be found fit to hold the rank of General ?

Comrades, I have just said that I am not ashamed to take the help of Nippon. I shall go further and say that if the once almighty British Empire can go round the world with the begging-bowl and can go down on its knees in order to obtain help from the United States of America, there is no reason why we—an enslaved and disarmed nation—should not take help from our friends. To-day, we may be taking the help of Nippon, to-morrow we shall not hesitate to take help from any other quarter—if that be possible, and if that be desirable, in the best interests of India.

Foreign Help is Essential

Nobody would be more happy than myself if we could achieve India's independence without foreign help of any sort. But I have yet to find one single instance in modern history where an enslaved nation has achieved its liberation without foreign help of some sort. And for enslaved India, it is much more honourable to join hands with enemies of the British Empire than to curry favour with British leaders or political parties. Our whole difficulty is that we do not hate our enemies enough, and our leaders do not teach us to hate India's enemies—though they teach us to hate those whom they regard as the enemies of other nations. It is not ridiculous for some of our leaders to talk of fighting Fascism abroad, while shaking hands with imperialism at home ?

Comrades, I would never have opened my mouth and said one word to you, if I had been sitting as an arm-chair politician here. But I and my comrades here are engaged in a grim struggle. Our comrades at the front have to play with death. Even those who are not at the front have to face danger every moment of their existence. When we were in Burma, bombing and machine-gunning was our daily entertainment. I have seen many of my comrades killed, maimed and injured from the enemy's ruth-

less bombing and machine-gunning. I have seen the entire hospital of the *Azad Hind Fouz* in Rangoon razed to the ground, with our helpless patients suffering heavy casualties.

That I and many others with me are still alive to-day is only through God's grace. It is because we are living, working and fighting in the presence of death that I have a right to speak to you and to advise you. Most of you do not know what carpet-bombing is. Most of you do not know what is to be machine-gunned by low-flying bombers and fighters. Most of you have had no experience of bullets whistling past you, to your right and to your left. Those who have gone through this experience and have nevertheless kept up their morale, cannot everlook at Lord Wavell's offer.

Comrades, we have to consider what to do about Lord Wavell's offer. First of all, though the time at your disposal is short, you will have to do everything possible to prevent the acceptance of this offer by the Congress Working Committee. Secondly, if you fail in that, you will then have to create a situation, which will force the Congress representatives to resign from the Viceroy's Executive Council. This will not be difficult. You will have to insist on the release of all political prisoners which will, in itself, bring about a crisis between the Viceroy and the Congress members of the Executive Council. There is no doubt that when the new Executive Council is formed, the Viceroy will begin to exploit India's resources in men, money and materials for fighting Britain's future war in the Far East.

This will naturally raise numerous issues in which India's interests will clash with those of Britain. If you keep up your agitation and propaganda, then the Congress members of the Executive Council will be forced to stand up for India's interests against those of Britain, in which case, a clash with the Viceroy will be certain. Then you will have to agitate in order to prevent Indian troops being sent as cannon-fodder to the Far East.

If you fail in that, you will have to undertake sabotage, in order to disrupt enemy transport and lines of communication. As you are aware, during the last 5 years the British were giving valuable instructions for organising and carrying on an underground movement in countries which went out of their control or influence. If you make use of all those instructions and apply them against the British in India, you will achieve valuable results. Last but not the least, you will have to form cells with the Indian Army and prepare for a revolt from within. The Indian Army of to-day is not the Indian Army of 1939. It is an Army which, according to British report, is two-and-a-half million strong. In this army there

are many who are politically-minded and nationalists at heart. The time for a revolt will come when this army is demobilised, if India is not free by then. Thanks to this war, two-and-a-half million Indians have been trained in the use of arms. When the time comes for their disbandment, they can raid armouries and get the arms with which to fight our British rulers. The Chittagong Armoury Raid in 1930 was an excellent example of how arms belonging to our enemy could be procured and then used against them.

Motto of Revolutionaries

Comrades, I shall now close for the day. But before I conclude I would remind you that a revolutionary is one who believes in the justice of a cause and who believes that that cause is bound to prevail in the long run. He who gets depressed over failures or set-backs, is no revolutionary. The motto for a revolutionary is Hope for the best, but be prepared for the worst.

I am confident that if we fight on and if we play our cards well in the international field, we shall win our freedom by the end of this war. But that does not mean that if, by any chance, we fail to do so, we should be disheartened or depressed. Consequently, if the worst happens and India does not emerge as an independent State by the end of this war, our next plan shall be a post-war revolution inside India. And if we fail in that, too, then there will be World War No. 3 to give us another opportunity to strike for our freedom.

I have no doubt that World War No. 3 will break out within ten years of the end of this war, if not earlier, in case all the suppressed nations of the world are not liberated during the course of the present war. India's independence is a settled fact. The only uncertain factor is the time factor. At the worst, it may take a few more years for India to be free. Why then should we be easily discouraged and rush to the Viceroy's House for a compromise ? Your task as revolutionaries will be to keep the Flag of Independence flying until such time, as that Flag proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

Jai Hind.

NETAJI ON JHANSI RANI REGIMENT

BY SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

"Our past has been a great and glorious one. India could not have produced a heroine like the Rani of Jhansi, if she did not have a glorious tradition. In the same way, as we have figures like Maitreyi in India's ancient days, we have the inspiring example of Ahalyabai of Maharashtra, Rani Bhawani of Bengal, Razya Begum and Noor Jehan, who were shining administrators in recent historic times prior to British Rule in India. I have every confidence in the fertility of the Indian soil. I am confident that India, as in the past, will surely produce the best flowers of Indian womanhood".....

* * * *

"It is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth earthy, he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life immortal. This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die so that the nation may live. Today I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory."

Subhas Chandra Bose

HIS VARIOUS CONVICTIONS AND DETENTIONS

1. *10th December, 1921*—Arrested in connection with Civil Disobedience movement—Tried and convicted—Sentenced to 6 months' simple imprisonment, Detained in Presidency Jail.

2. *25th October, 1924*—While he was Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation of Calcutta arrested in Calcutta under Regulation III of 1818. First detained in Alipore Central Jail—Then transferred to Berhampore Jail—Then taken to Mandalay.

   16th May, 1927—Released from the Governor's Steam launch unconditionally for reasons of health after being brought to Calcutta from Mandalay.

3. *3rd September, 1929*—Arrested along with Sjt. Kiran Sankar Roy, Dr. J. M. Das Gupta and others on a charge of sedition for leading a procession on the All-Bengal Political Sufferers day along with posters "Long live revolution" "Down with imperialism" etc. on the 11th August, 1929.

4. *23rd January, 1930*—Convicted by the Magistrate of Alipore and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. Detained in Alipore Central Jail.

   23rd September, 1930—Released from Alipore Central Jail.

5. *18th January, 1931*—On his way to Maldah from Berhampore served with an order under Sec. 144 Criminal Procedure Code at Amnaura a wayside station on the outskirts of Maldah prohibiting him from entering the district of Maldah. Arrested. Tried on the spot and sentenced to 7 days' simple imprisonment. Detained in Maldah Jail.

6. *26th January, 1931*—Arrested while leading a procession on the Independence Day near Ochterlony Monument.

27th January, 1931—Convicted by the Chief Presidency Magistrate and sentenced to 6 months' rigorous imprisonment. Detained in the Presidency Jail.

7. *2nd January, 1932*—Arrested under Regulation III of 1818 at Kalyan Station in the Bombay Presidency and taken to Seoni Subjail. Then taken to Jubbulpore Central Jail. Then to Madras for medical examination. Then again to Balrampore Hospital, U. P. (Balrampore).

8. *23rd February, 1933*—Left for Europe while still in detention.

9. *8th April, 1936*—Landed at Bombay and again arrested under Regulation III of 1818. Detained in Alipore Central Jail, then detained in Kurseong, then brought to Alipore Central Jail and then removed to Medical College Hospital.

17th March, 1937--Released from Medical College Hospital.

10. *2nd July, 1940*—Arrested in Calcutta after he had declared his intention to lead the volunteers for the actual demolition of Holwel Monument. Charged with Sedition in respect of a speech in Mahomed Ali Park and an Article in "Forward Bloc" before the Chief Presidency Magistrate and the Magistrate of Alipore.

5th December, 1940—Brought to Elgin Road House after hunger strike for 7 days—from 29th November to 5th December, 1940 —in the Presidency Jail.

26th January, 1941—Went away from Elgin Road House.

OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM

(In Roman Scripts)

vande mátaram.
sujaláṁ suphalám malayaja-śítaláṁ,
śasya-śyámalám mátaram:
vande mátaram.

śubhra-jyotsná-pulakita-yáminím,
phulla-kusumita-druma-dala-śobhiníṁ,
suhásiníṁ sumadhura-bhás'in'íṁ,
sukhadáṁ varadám mátaram :
vande mátaram.

catváriṁśa-kot'i-kan't'ha-kalakala-ninsearch-karále,
dvi-catváriṁśa-bhujair dhr'ta-khara-karavále,
abalá kena má eta bale ?

bahu-bala-dhárin'íṁ namámi tárin'íṁ
ripu-dala-várin'ím mátaram:
vande mátaram.

tumi vidyá, tumi dharma,
tumi hr'di, tumi marma,
tvaṁ hi prán'áh' śaríre.

báhu-te tumi má śakti,
hr'daye tumi má bhakti ;
tomári pratimá gar'i
mandire mandire.

tvaṁ hi durgá daśa-praharan'a-dhárin'í,
kamalá kamala-dala-vihárin'í,
ván'í vidyá dáyiní,
namámi tvám.

namámi kamalám, amalám, atuláṁ,
sujaláṁ, suphalám mátaram.

śyámalam saralám,
susmitám, bhús'itám,
dharan'ím, bharan'ím mátaram:
vande mátaram.

VANDE' MA'TARAM

LAUDO MATREM (I Adore My Mother)

English Translation

(BY DR. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI)

Laudo Matrem ! I adore my Mother !
Her of sweet water and goodly fruits,
Her who is cool like the sandal growing in the Southern Hills,
The Mother who is green with corn—
Laudo Matrem ! I adore my Mother !

I adore Her with nights thrilled by moonlight white,
I adore Her fair with trees blooming with flowers,
I adore Her sweetly-smiling, sweetly-speaking,
The Mother that gives joy, and gives bliss—
Laudo Matrem ! I adore my Mother !

O Thou that art terrible with the din of clamour from forty *crores* of throats,
O Thou that holdest the sharp sword in twice-forty *crores* of hands,
Why powerless Thou, Mother, with such power ?
I salute Her, the Holder of much strength, the Saviour, the Mother who stops the bands of foemen:
Laudo Matrem ! I adore my Mother !

Thou art Wisdom, Thou art the all-holding Law,
Thou art the Heart, Thou art the Heart's Secrets,
Thou indeed the Vital Breaths within the body.

In the arms, Mother Thou art Strength,
In the heart, Mother, Thou art Faith;
It is Thy image which we build,
From temple to temple.

Thou art the Helper in Danger, wielding Thy ten weapons,
Thou art Beauty-and-Riches, sporting among lotus banks,
Thou art Speech and Learning, giving us Wisdom,
I salute Thee.

I salute Thee, that art Beauty-Lotus,
I salute Thee that art Pure and Incomparable,
I salute Thee, the Mother with sweet waters and goodly fruits:
The Mother who is dark and green, who is simplicity's soul,
Who is sweetly smiling, who is richly adorned,
The Mother who is the all-embracing Earth, who is the Nourisher:
Laudo Matrem! I adore thee Mother!

JHAN'D'A' PRA'RTHANA'

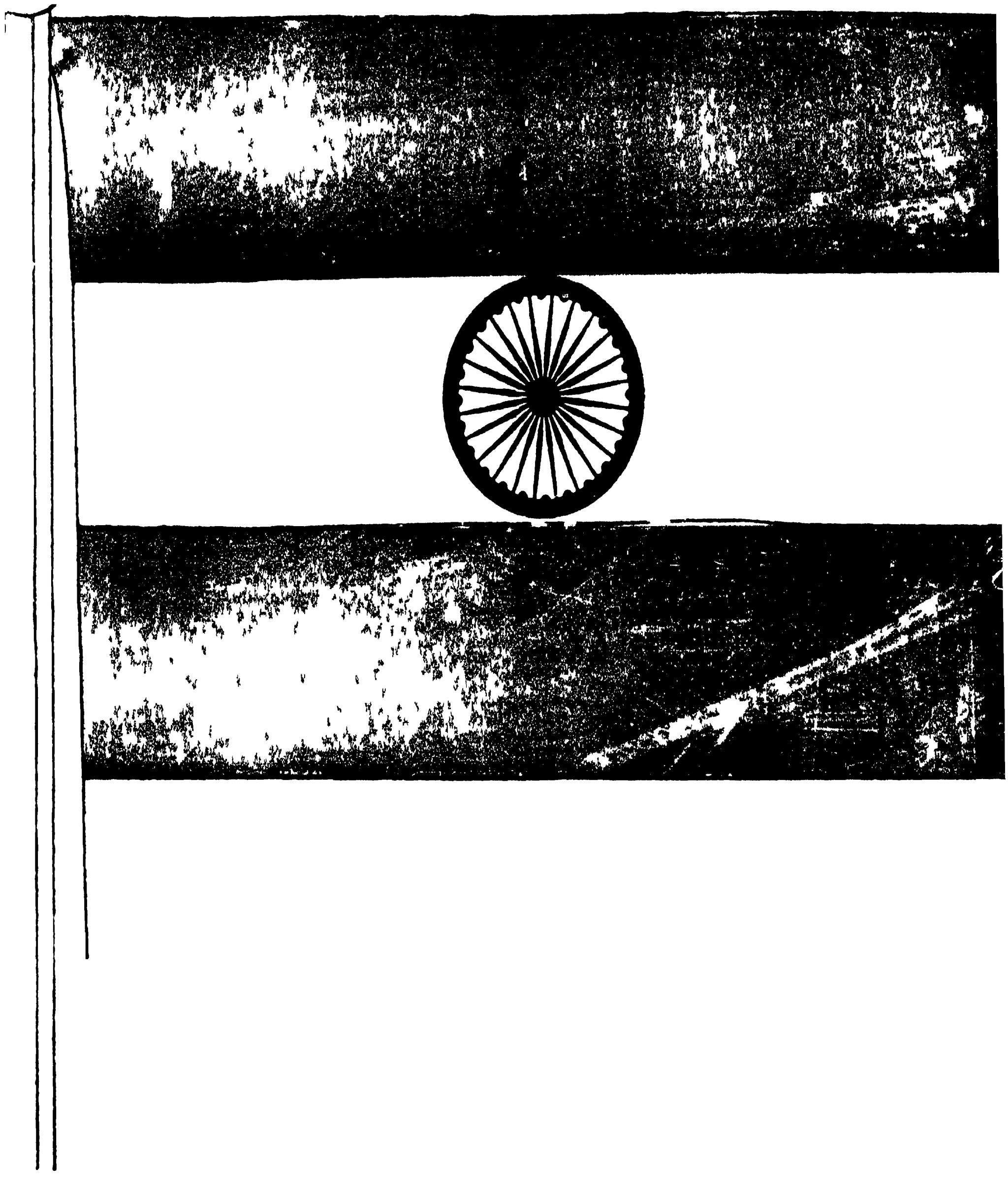
vijayí viśwa tiraṅgá pyárá,
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá.
sadá śakti sarasáne-wálá,
prem-sudhá barasáne-wálá,
mátr'-bhúmi-ká tan-man-sárá
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá. (1)

is jhan'd'e-ke níce nirbhay,
len̐ swarájya yah avical niścay,—
bolo—"Bhárat-mátá-kí jay !"
swatantratá hai dhyeya hamárá,
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá. (2)

swatantratá-ke bhís'an' ran'-men̐,
lakh-kar joś bar'he ks'an'-ks'an'-men̐,
kán̐pe śatru dekh-kar man-men̐,—
mit' jáy saṅkat' hamárá—
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá. (3)

áo, pyáre viro, áo—
deś dharm par bali bali jáo—
ek sáth sab mil-kar gáo—
"pyárá Bhárat-vars'a hamárá."
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá. (4)

is-kí śán na jáne páwe,
cáhe ján bhale hí jáye,
viśwa-vijay kar-ke dikhláwe,
tab howe pran' púrn'a hamárá.
jhan'd'á ún̐cá rahe hamárá. (5)



National Flag
of
Free India

THE FLAG SONG

(BY DR. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI)

(1)

Victorious in the world, our beloved Tri-colour,
May our banner remain high!
Ever renewing our strength,
Ever raining the nectar of love,
The soul of the body and mind of the Motherland—
May our banner remain high!

(2)

Under this flag, fearless,
Let us win *Swaráj* (freedom), unshaken, certain:
Say—"Victory to Mother India!"
Independence is what we have set our hearts upon.
May our banner remain high!

(3)

In the terrible fight for liberty,
Every minute by looking at it our enthusiasm grows.
In his mind the enemy trembles, seeing it:
May our troubles be ended—
May our banner remain high!

(4)

Come, dear heroes, come,
Be a sacrifice for your land and faith,
All together, sing this song—
"Our beloved Bharata-varsha."
May our banner remain high!

(5)

May its glory never depart,
Our life may very well go.
We shall show, conquering all:
And then our vow will be fulfilled.
May our banner remain high!

QADAM QADAM BAR'HAYE JA'

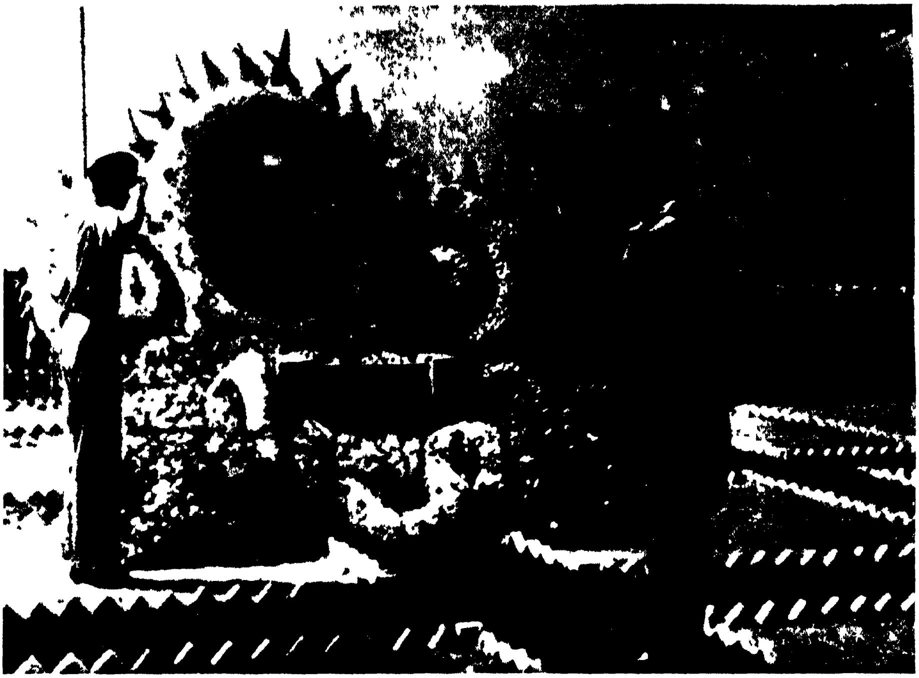
qadam qədam bar'háye já,
kh'uśí-ke gít gáye já:
yah zindagi' hai qaum-ki'
(tu) qaum-pa lut'áye já.

tu śer-i-Hind, áge bar'h:
marne-se phir bhi' tu na d'ar:
ásmán tak ut'há-ke sar,
joś-e-watan bar'háye já.

teri' himmat bar'hti' rahe,
Kh'udá teri' suntá rahe;
jo sámne tere car'he
tu kh'ák-men miláye já.

"calo Dilli'" pukár-ke,
qaumi' niśán samhál-ke,
lál qille gár'-ke,
lahráye já, lahráye já!

Jai Hind!



Netaji saluting the 'Saheeds' in Singapore



Col. Loganadhan talking to Sikh gentlemen of influence in Sanghai



Provisional Government. Azad Hind Dinner Party given by Netaji



A Declaration of Anglo-American war and the raising of hands for the favour of declaration by the army and civil population, Singapore, 1943

QADAM QADAM

(By Dr. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI)

(1)

Step by step, advancing, march;
Songs of joy—singing, march;
This life of thine belongs to thy People:
March thou, sacrificing it for thy People.

(2)

Lion of India, go thou forward !
And never do thou fear even death !
Lifting thy head up to the sky,
March on, advancing the glory of thy Motherland.

(3)

Thy courage may go on growing,
May God go on listening to thee.
Those that stand in front of Thee—
March thou, mingling them in the dust.

(4)

Shouting "To Delhi let us go",
Holding aloft the National Flag,
Fixing it firm in the Red Fort,
March thou, waving it, waving it high.
Hail, India !

MAKER OF MODERN INDIAN HISTORY

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE HAMARE DESH KE UN GINE HUYE MAHAPURUSHON MEN HAIN JINHONE ADHUNIK BHARTIYA ETIHAS KA NIRMAN KIYA HAI.

BHARATMATA KE VOH AISE SAPOOT THE JINHONE KAVI AUR SINGH KE SAMAN LEEK CHHOR KAR APNE LIYE NAYA MARG BANAYA.

DESH KE BAHAR JAKAR JIS PRAKAR DESH KO SWATANTRA KARNEKI KAMNA KO UNHONE VIAVHARIK ROOP DIYA AUR RASHTRIYA SENA KA NIRMAN KAR BRITISH GOVERNMENT KA SAMNA KIYA VOH UNKE ADBHUT VYAKTITVA KA PARICHAYAK HAI.

UNKA ALPA KINTU SANGHARSHA PURNA JIWAN HAMARE DESHKI MAHAN THATI HAI.

The above telegraphic message in Hindi in Roman script on "NETAJI" was received from the Hon. Shri Purushottamdas Tandon.